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THE MAYA VASE BOOK

A CORPUS OF ROLLOUT PHOTOGRAPHS OF MAYA VASES

BY JUSTIN KERR

WITH ESSAYS BY

MICHAEL D. COE
MARY ELLEN MILLER
LINDA SCHELE
DAVID STUART

VOLUME 1

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THE ELECTRONIC EDITION

THE MAYA VASE BOOK

A CORPUS OF ROLLOUT PHOTOGRAPHS OF MAYA VASES

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VOLUME 1

THE MAYA VASE BOOK, VOLUME 1
A Corpus of Rollout Photographs of Maya Vases

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in PC Pagemaker and presented in
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All drawings in the Corpus by
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PREFACE

When I first began designing and building the rollout camera. with the objective of making it easier to study vase painting, I did not realize that it would become an all consuming interest The archives of roll-out photographs of Maya vases have happfly brought me Into contact with iconographers, epigraphers, art historians, archaeologists, and the many other people who have become interested in the ancient Maya culture.

In order to make the rollout photographs available forstudy. in a format that is easy to use, I have decided to publish all of the unpublished rollouts in workbook form in a corpus of six or seven volumes. I have photographically rolled out nearly1400 vases to date. and only approximately 800 have been published previously. This volume contains a compendium of the published rollouts (From Volume 5) with their file numbers so that they can be found and referred to easily. I hope that by the time the last volume Is printed, I will have accumulated many more rollouts so that the project may continue. I urge collectors and institutions to join in this effort to publish vases that have not been seen in rollout form.

The format of the book is not complex The rollout photograph generally will stand on its own with little or no comment from me. In some cases I have enhanced an image with drawings or pointed out a particular passage that is ofmore than passing interest. There are certain conventions that are followed throughout the book. The dimensions of each vase are given in the following order, height (ht.), diameter (dia.), and circumference (cir.). (I have recorded the average circumference of each vase, because most of the vases are not truly straight sided, and therefore the circumference is not a function of the diameter). All vases are painted ceramic unless otherwise noted.

Some of the vases will look sad next to some of the great masterpieces that have been previously published, but perhaps the quality of the information will overshadow the poor quality of the art. Even the inept Maya artist should have an audience.

I have eliminated from the books, rollout photographs of certain vases because I believe that they have been overpainted beyond the bounds of meaning, or that they are total fakes. However, I am publishing certain other

overpainted vases because the message that is told by the original artist has not been totally lost. I have included two “composite’ rollouts made from photographs that were done prior to the building of the rollout camera. The decision to publish or not, is totally mine and I take all the responsibility. However, I must put in a caveat. In studying the vases, one must always be aware of the possibilty of inaccurate overpainting. Judgements should be made on the basis of more than one example, or by comparison with similar scenes or phrases from other sources.

The vases are being published in chronological order, as they were photographed. I have made no attempt to put the vases in any particular order, since each person will have individual study needs and usages. I have occasionally made reference by vase number, to related themes that may have some bearing on a specific vase. In some cases I have suggested a connection between vases, either from the point of view of the artist’s hand, or some iconographic message. I have included some new readings of glyphic passages as well.

Information about all of the vases has been entered into a computer database.

This information is broken down Into both physical and iconographic data. There are more than 125 different fields or categories that make up the record on each vase. On some vases, where where is only a rim text band, that fact is recorded and broken down into whether or not it is a PSS, or whether a TZIB. or a U TZIB Is present. Some of the categories recorded are the types of vases; (polychrome, codex, incised, carved or black and white), and the scenes represented on the vases; (ballgame, hunt, warfare, cosmos, etc.). ‘My classification of the characters that appear on the vases is also recorded. If one wished to know for example, the numbers of vases on which God A appears, or where God A appears in conjunction with the Hero Twins or other gods, that information can be solicited from the database.

Certain glyphs have also been selected to be part of the record. Hand holding fish, T714. and *AkbaL* T504, are examples of the glyphs included. The dictionary of the database is available to anyone who wishes to make use of it. I can answer queries with print-out information on simple or complex combinations of categories. The entire database is also available to anyone in a number of formats.

My thanks to the authors, Michael Coe, Mary Miller Linda Schele, and David Stuart, who have been inspirational and generous with their knowledge and confidence in me. My thanks to Barbara Kerr for her drawings, design and patience with this project. Her untiring efforts and her willingness to lend an ear whenever neccessary, has made this effort worth while.

The rules for using the rollout photographs are simple. There is no need for permission to use any of the photographs in a scholarlywork or paper or if it is being published in a not-for-profit book as permission is hereby granted and implicit to any scholar or student. The copyright notice and date, with the file number must accompany the rollout. Rollout photographs may not be used in any commerical or profit-making book or venture, without prior written permission and discussion of fees.

Hopefully, this effort will result in many exciting discoveries about the Maya. May the Lords of Xibalba look kindly on your work.

Justin Kerr
New York
June, 1989

Revised May 1998

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The Maya Scribe and His World
Michael Coe
Photographs by Justin Kerr
The Grolier Society, New York 1972

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Michael Coe
Photographs by Justin Kerr
The Princeton Art Museum, Princeton
1975

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Old Gods and Young Heroes
Michael Coe
Photographs by Justin Kerr
The Israel Museum, Jerusalem 1978

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BOD

The Maya Book of the Dead

Francis Robiscek and Donald Hales University of Virgina Art Museum, 1981

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Linda Schele and Mary Ellen Miller
Photographs by Justin Kerr
The Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, 1986

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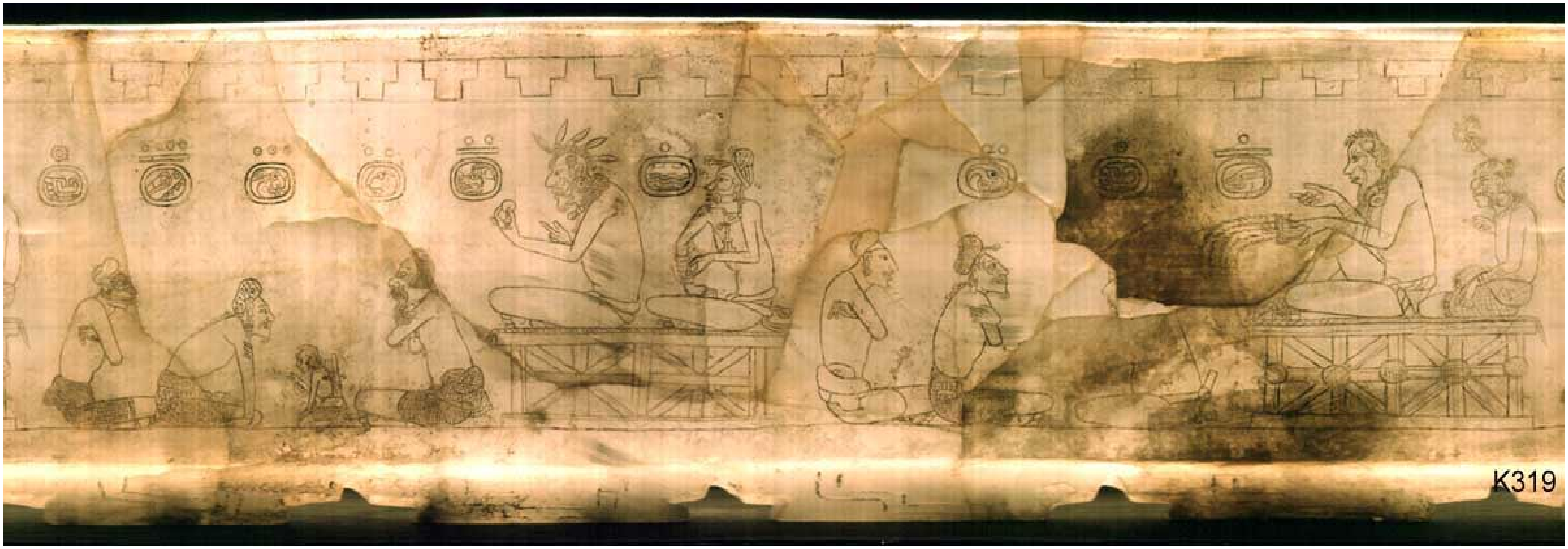
THIS
VOLUME IS
DEDICATED TO THOSE
UNKNOWN MAYA ARTISTS
WHO HAVE LEFT US A RARE VIEW
OF THEIR LIFE AND PHILOSOPHY.

THE
ELECTRONIC
VERSION OF THIS
VOLUME IS DEDICATED
TO LINDA SCHELE, WHO DIED
THIS YEAR. SHE IS MISSED BY ALL

MAY, 1998.

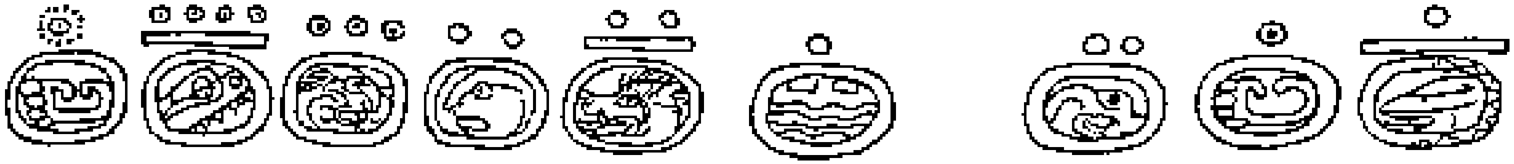
© Kerr 1968
Composite Rollout

File no. K114



© Kerr 1968
Incised Alabaster

File no. K319



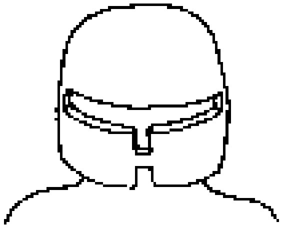
© Kerr 1974
Composite Rollout

File no. K114

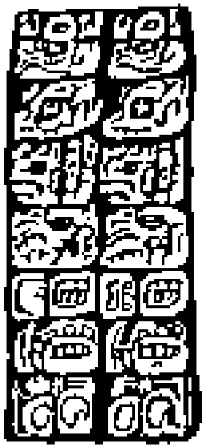
© Kerr 1968
Ht. 17 cm

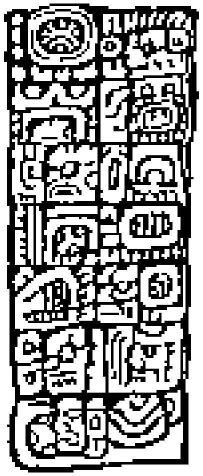
File no. K500

A ceramic figure from the Peten wears a similar helmet.



© Kerr 1975
Ht. 16 cm MD

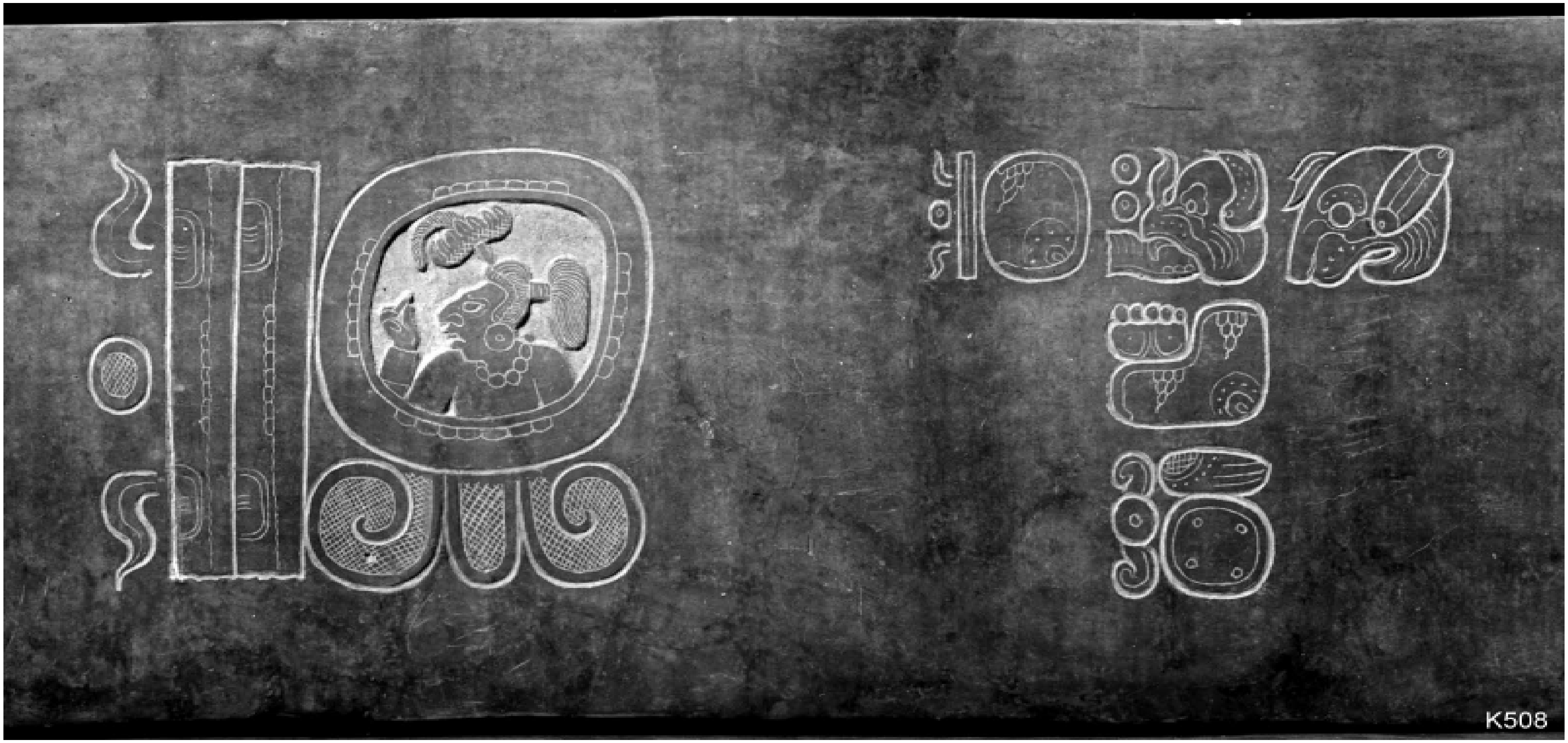




File no. K503

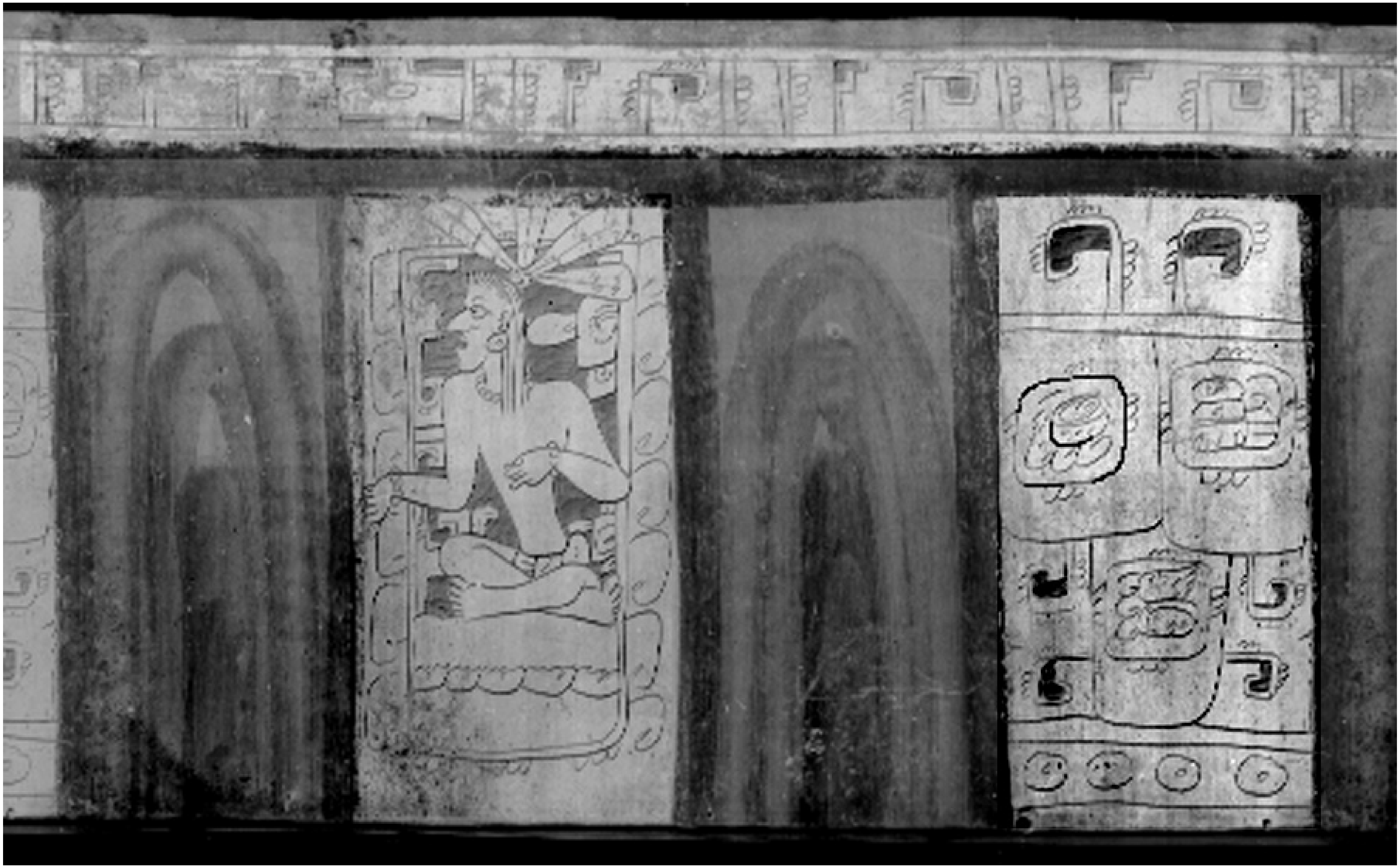
© Kerr 1988
File no K505
Ht. 19.3 Dia. 10.5 Cir. 33 cm PY

Both animals wear the Ah K'Hun headress



© Kerr 1975
Carved and incised

File no. 508



© Kerr 1975
Incised and painted ceramic

File no. K509

© Kerr 1976
Ht. 17.0 Dia. 10.5 Cir. 32.9 cm PY

File no. K559

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File no K594

Ht. 21 Dia. 18.5 Cir. 57.5 cm PY

University Museum, Philadelphia, PA

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Ht. 19.8 Dia. 15.0 Cir. 49.0 cm PY

File no K620

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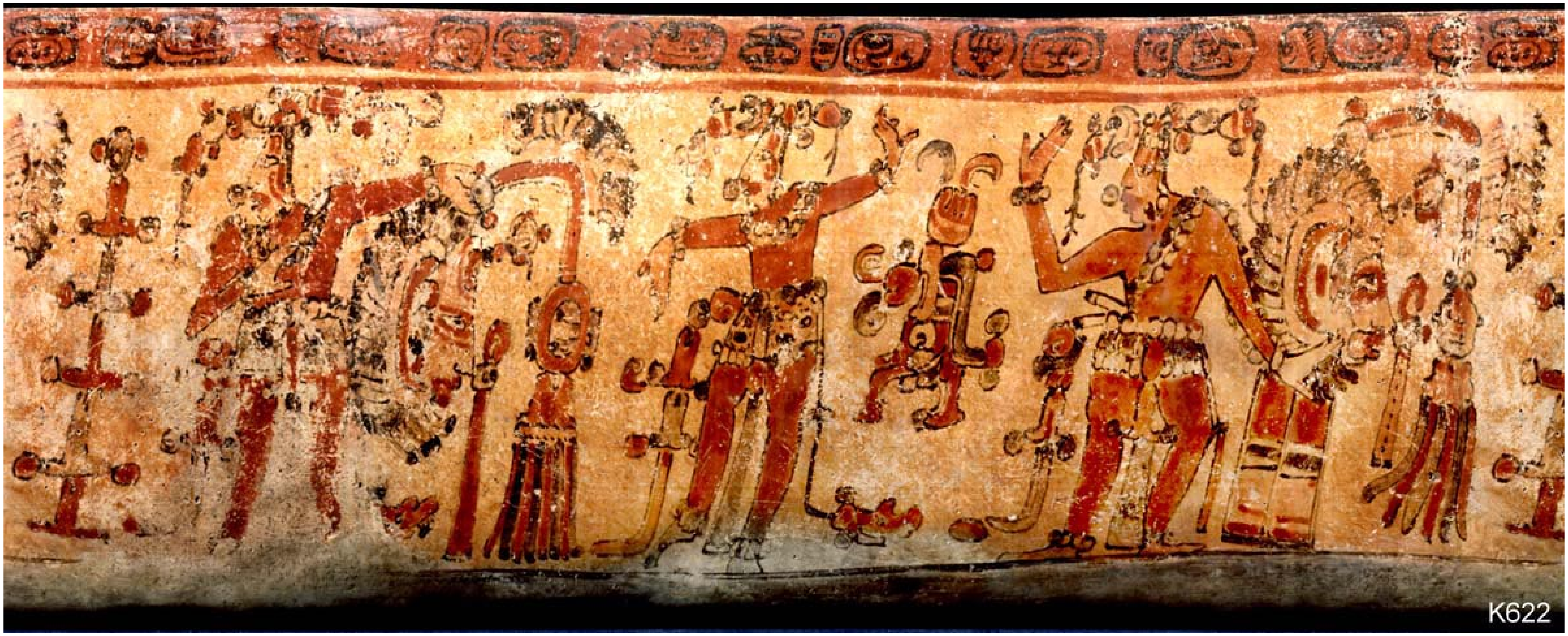
Ht. 16.8 Dia. 12.5 Cir. 39.3 cm PY



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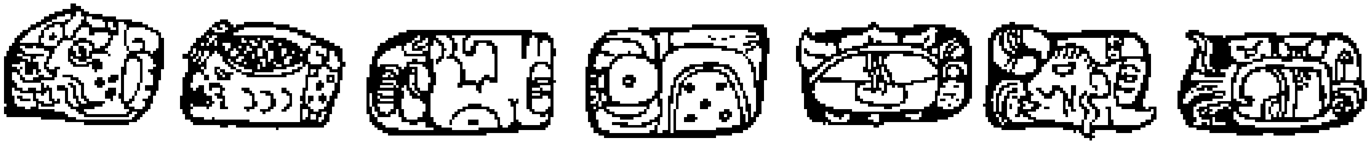
File no K622
Ht. 17.5 Dia. 15.0 Cir. 49.0 cm   PY



© Kerr 1976
File no K623

Ht. 17.0 Dia. 15.5 Cir. 48.5 cm

Incised and resist firing

© Kerr 1976
File no K624
Ht. 15.0 Dia. 9.1 Cir. 28.6 cm PY

© Kerr 1976

File no K625

Ht. 17.5 Dia. 12.5 Cir. 39.3 cm PY

© Kerr 1977
Ht. 20.5 Dia. 17.2 Cir. 54.0 cm   PY

File no K626

One of a number of vases with Hun Hunaphu (The Young Corn God) being dressed by ladies for his resurrection.

© Kerr 1976
Ht. 30.0 Dia. 12.0 Cir. 49.0 cm PY

File no K631

© Kerr 1977
Ht. 12.0 Dia. 13.0 Cir. 36.5 cm CV

File no K634

© Kerr 1977
Ht. 14.0 Dia. 12.5 Cir. 38.5 cm CV

File no K636

© Kerr 1977

File no K671

Ht. 20.5 Dia. 14.5 Cir. 45.0 cm PY

© Kerr 1977

File no K679

Ht. 14.0 Dia. 15.5 Cir. 52.0 cm PY

Bowl

© Kerr 1977
Ht. 18.0 Dia. 18.0 Cir. 33.0 cm PY

File no K680

Prisoner in center of group of three,
has had his eye removed.

© Kerr 1977

Ht. 12.5 Dia. 18.7 Cir. 60 cm   PY

File no K681

© Kerr 1977

File no K688

Ht. 22.5 Dia. 12.0 Cir. 36.5 cm   PY

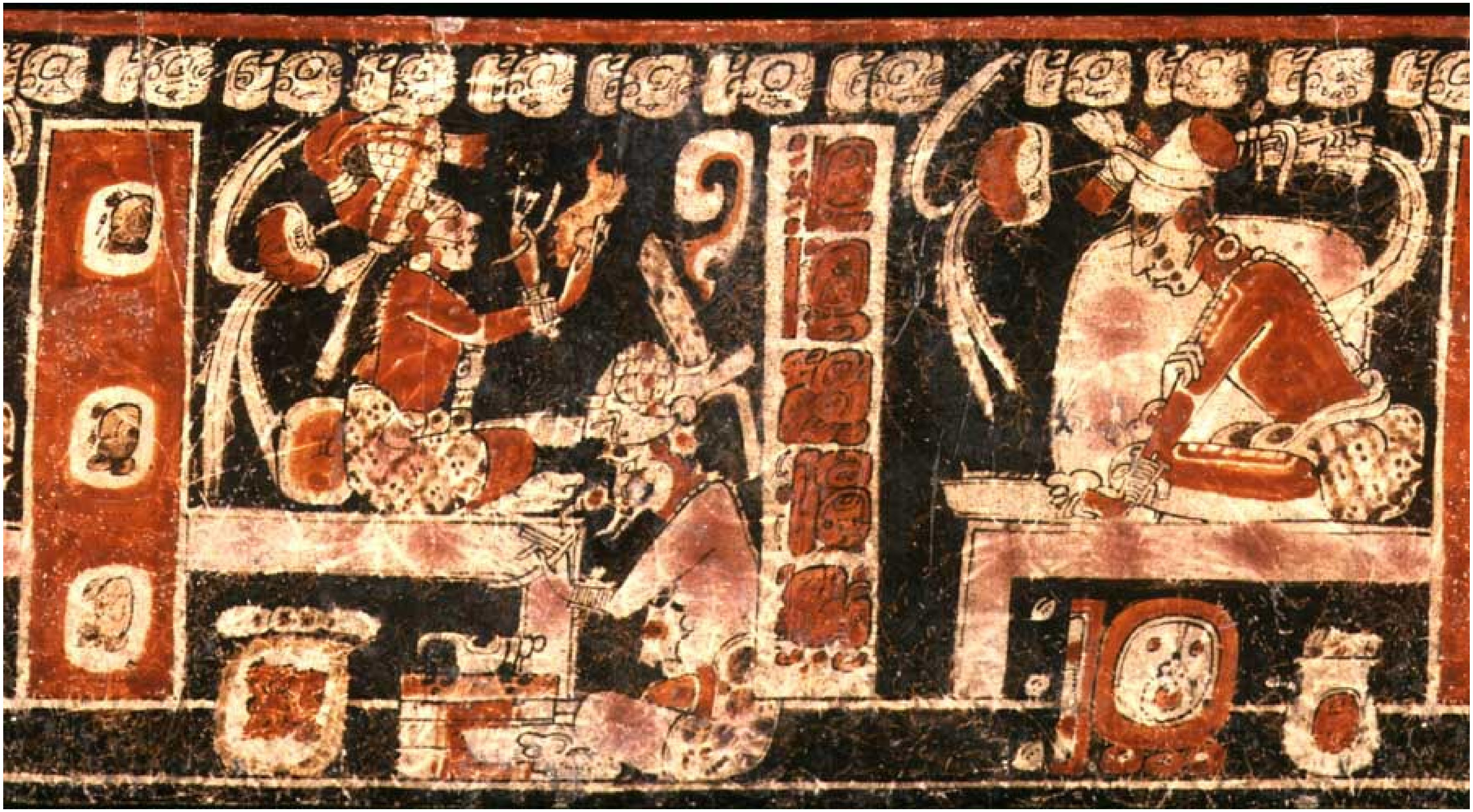
© Kerr 1977
Ht. 17.0 Dia. 12.4 Cir. 38.9 cm PY

File no K702

© Kerr 1977

File no K703

Ht. 22.7 Dia. 9.8 Cir. 30.8 cm PY



© Kerr 1977
Ht. 21.5 Dia. 13.2 Cir. 41.4 cm   PY

File no K717

© Kerr 1977

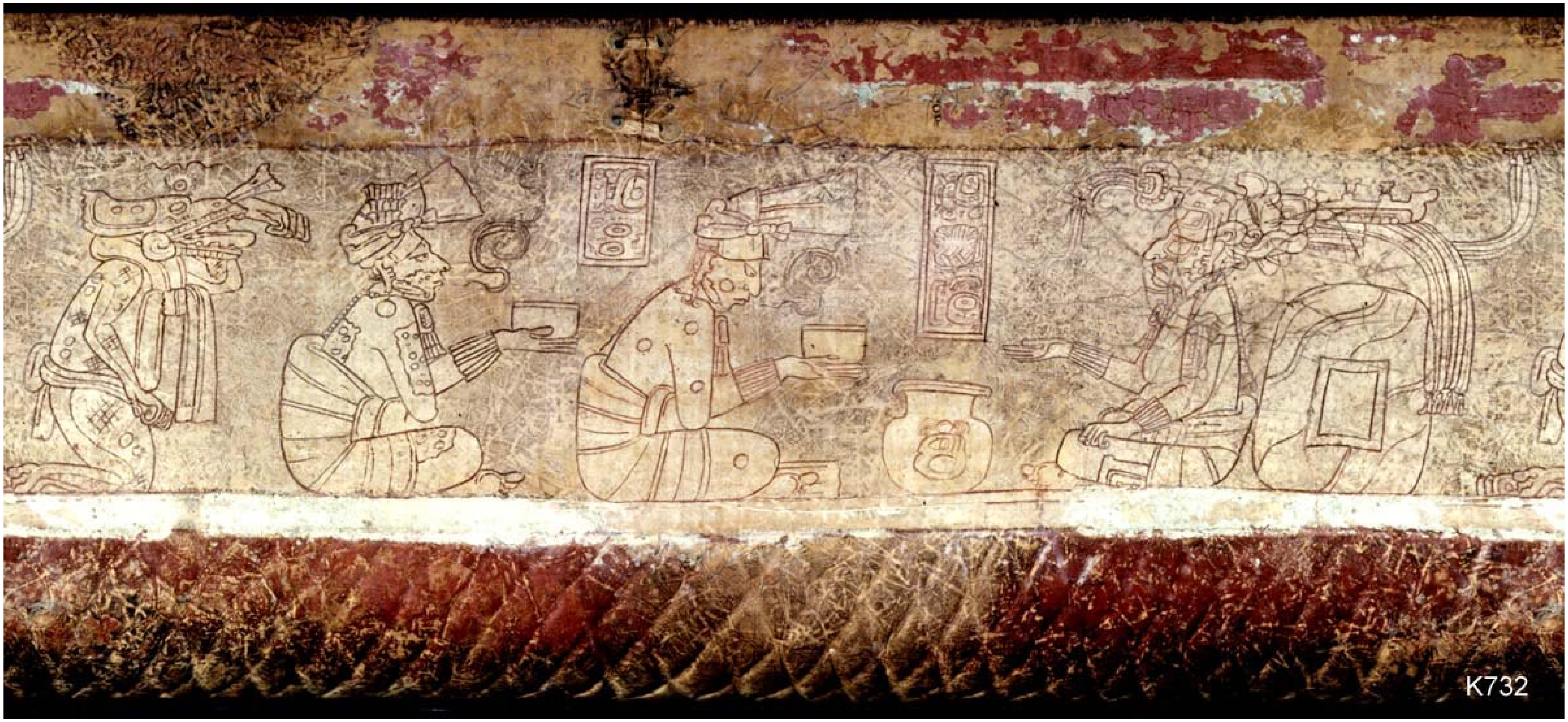
File no K718

Ht. 24.9 Dia. 16.5 Cir. 51.8 cm PY

© Kerr 1977
Ht. 15.0 Dia. 18.5 Cir. 50.5 cm PY

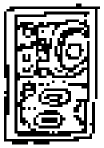
File no K728

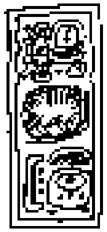
See Taube, K. & Barrera, A., *Las Esculturas de SanDiego: Nuevas Perspectivias*, for stone plaques with a similiar scene.



© Kerr 1976
Ht. 24.5 Dia. 16.0 Cir. 51.8 cm IN

File no K732





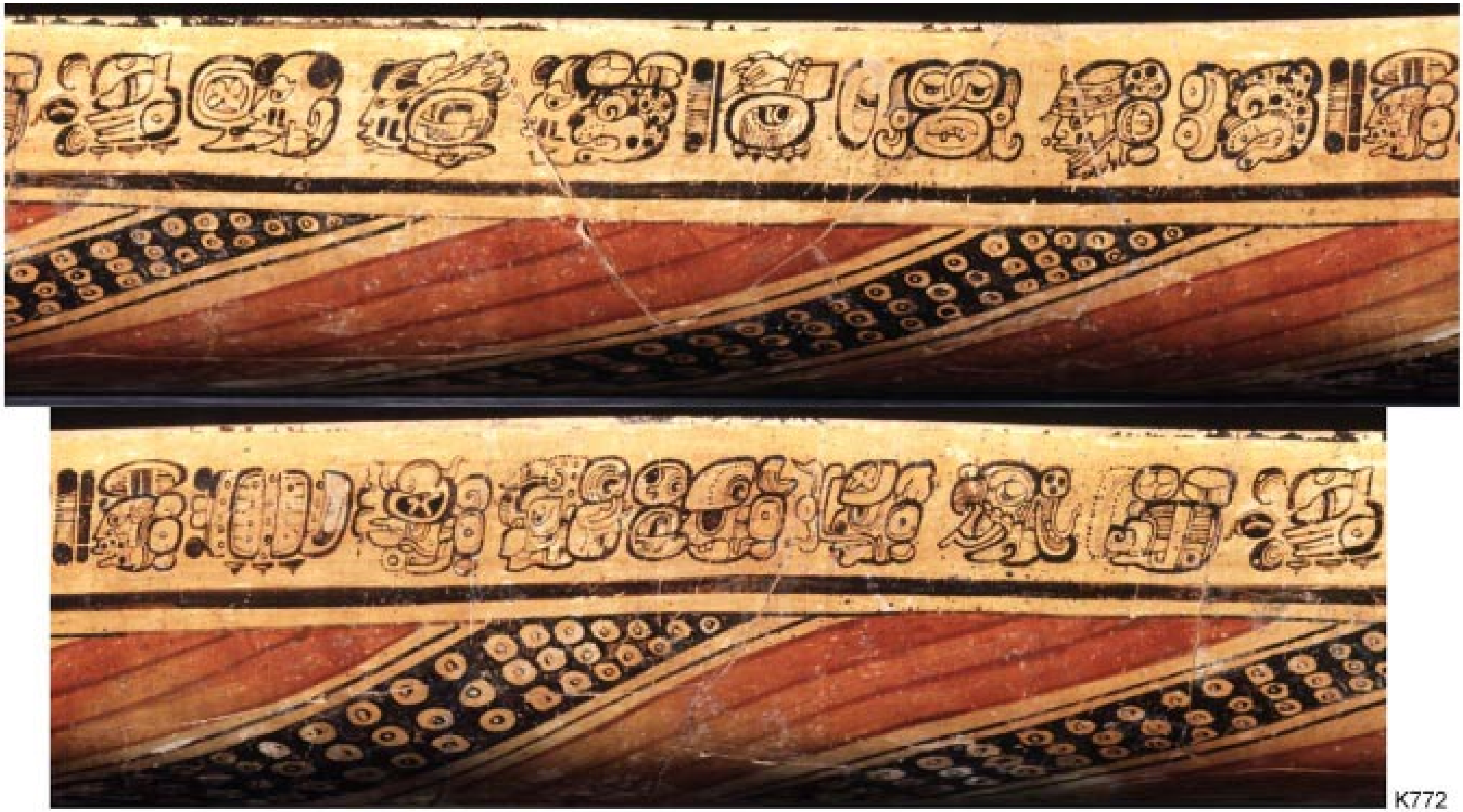
© Kerr 1978
Ht. 19.2 Dia. 13.3 Cir. 41.8 cm   PY

File no K748

© Kerr 1978
File no K751
Ht. 20.2 Dia. 11.6 Cir. 36.4 cm PY

© Kerr 1978
Ht. 17.2 Dia. 11.7 Cir. 36.6 cm PY

File no K764



K772

© Kerr 1978

File no K772

Ht. 11.2 Dia. 25.0 Cir. 78.5 cm PY

Bowl

© Kerr 1978
File no K774
Ht. 19.0 Dia. 16.4 Cir. 54.5 cm PY

© Kerr 1978

File no K787

Ht. 22 Dia. 10.5 Cir. 34.5 cm PY

© Kerr 1978
Ht. 20.0 Dia. 16.0 Cir. 50.0 cm PY

File no K791

The Art Museum, Princeton University
Princeton, NJ

© Kerr 1978
File no K792
Ht. 8.1 Dia. 18.0 Cir. 49.0 cm PY

The Art Museum, Princeton University
Princeton, NJ

© Kerr 1978
File no K793
Ht. 8.1 Dia. 18.0 Cir. 49.0 cm PY

The Art Museum, Princeton University
Princeton, NJ

© Kerr 1978

File no K795

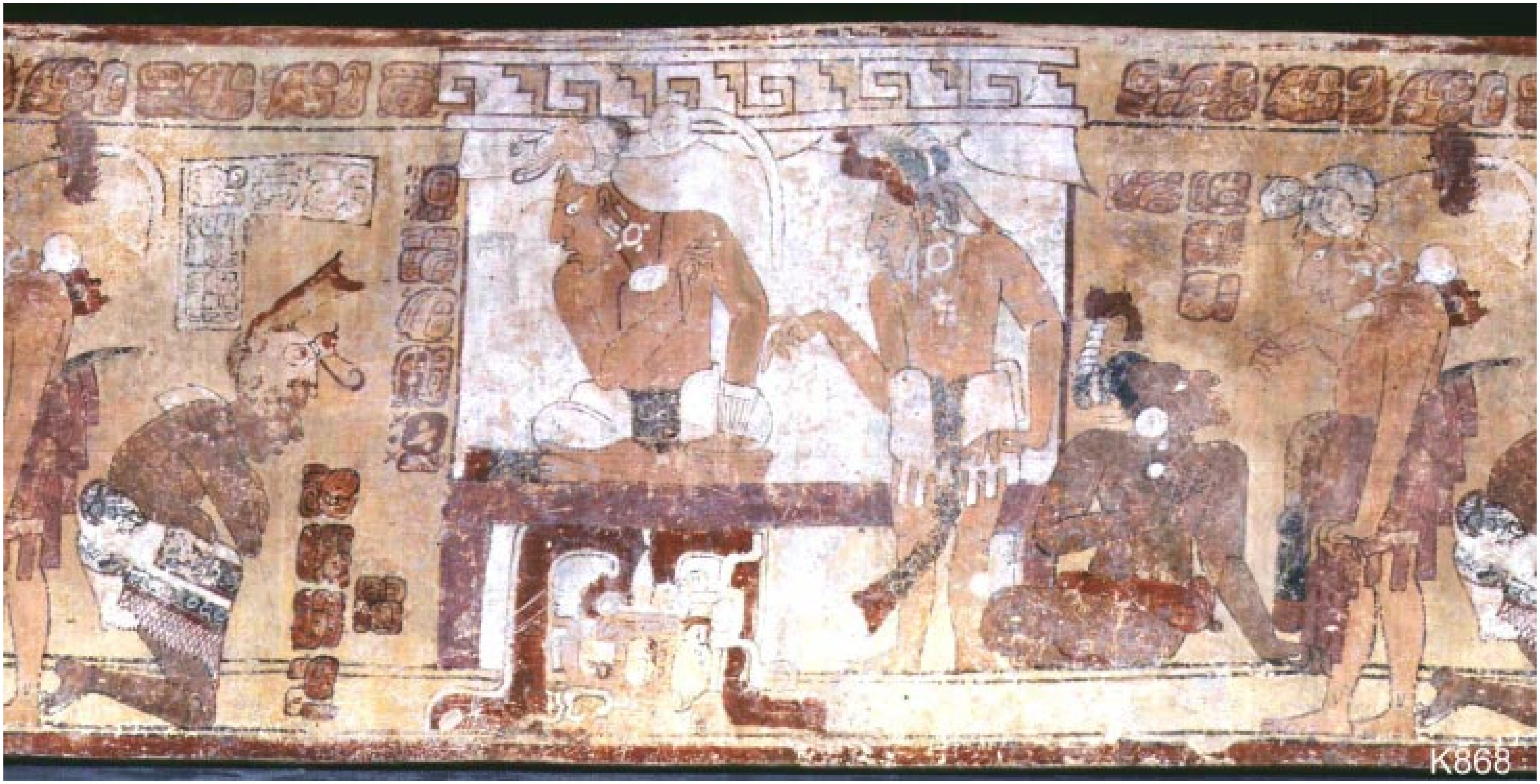
Ht. 18.0 Dia. 14.0 Cir. 50.0 cm PY

© Kerr 1978
Ht. 17.0 Dia. 10.0 Cir. 30.8 cm PY

File no K796

© Kerr 1978
Ht. 21.0 Dia. 18.3 Cir. 56.2 cm PY

File no K808



© Kerr 1979
File no K868
Ht. 22.5 Dia. 14.0 Cir. 43.5 cm PY

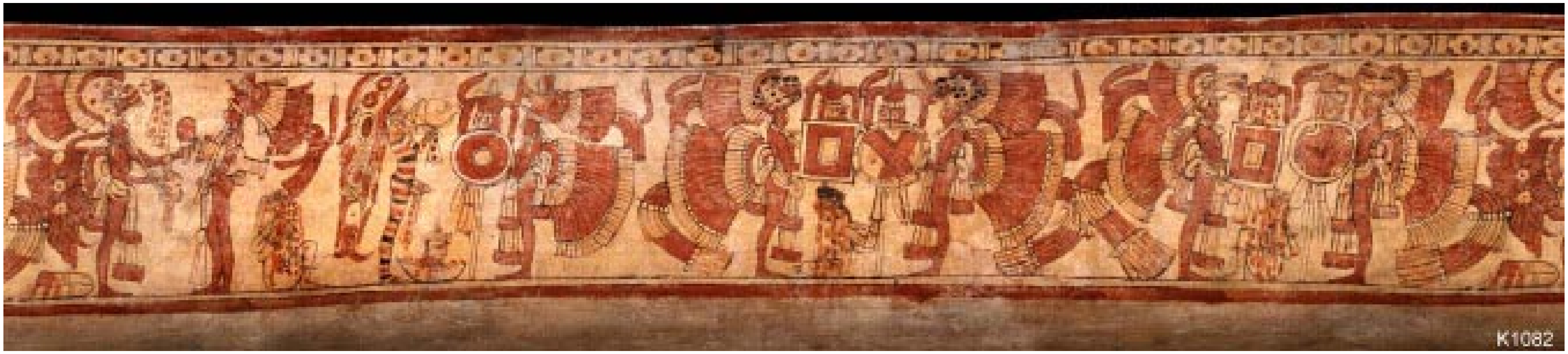
© Kerr 1979
Ht. 24.5 Dia. 14.6 Cir. 45.4 cm PY

File no K956

© Kerr 1979

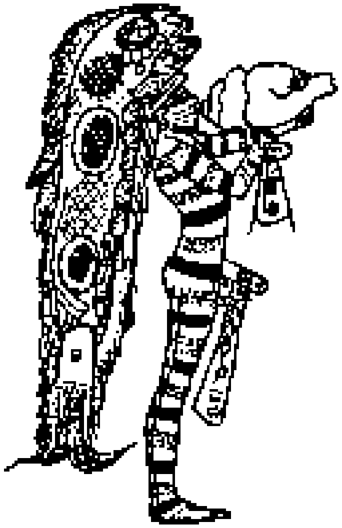
File no K1050

Ht. 21.0 Dia. 8.5 Cir. 31.0 cm PY



© Kerr 1979
Ht. 33.0 Dia. 41.5 Cir. 131.0 cm PY

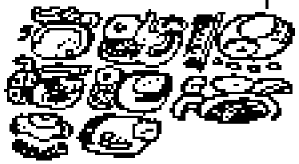
File no K1082



© Kerr 1979
File no K1092

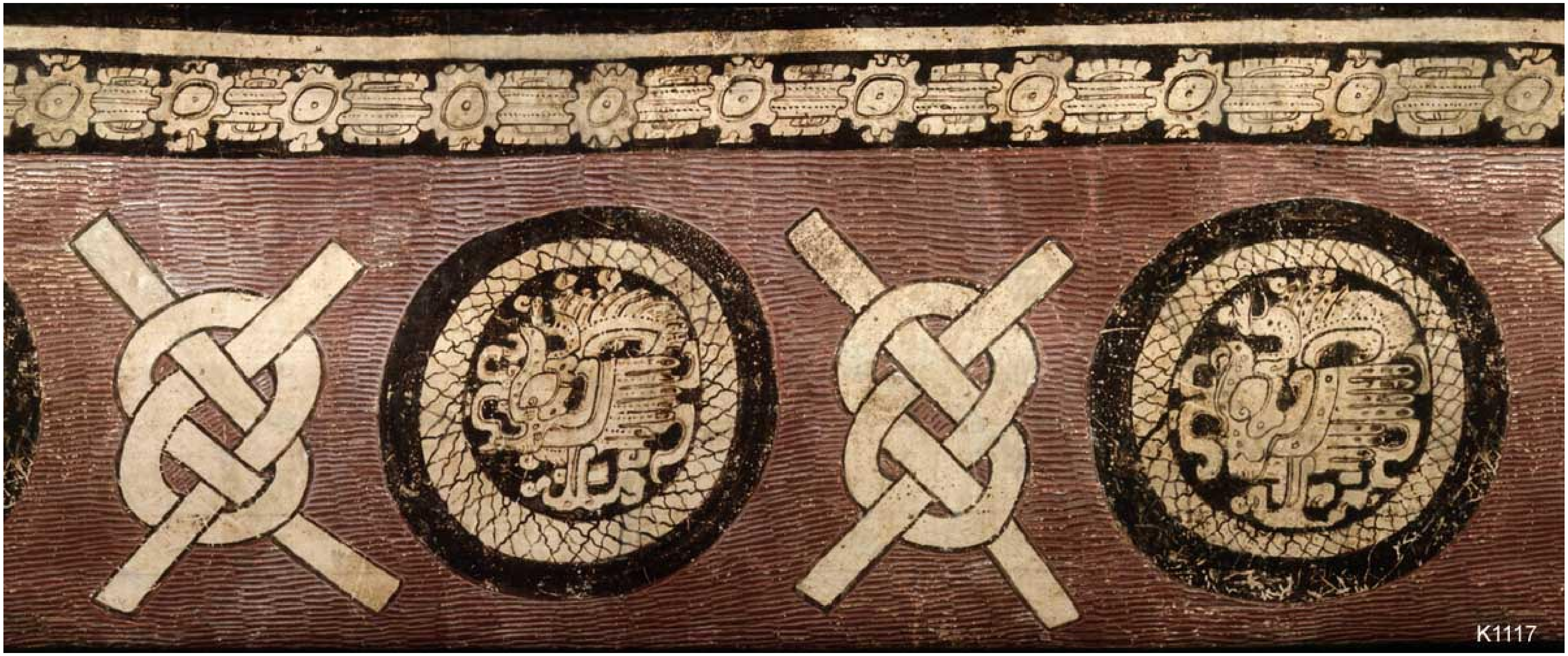
Ht. 19.0 Dia. 16.0 Cir. 50.5 cm PY

These two glyphs read *chi ki* (drunkard). *Chi* and its cognate *ki* may have the meaning of sweet and those substances which will ferment.

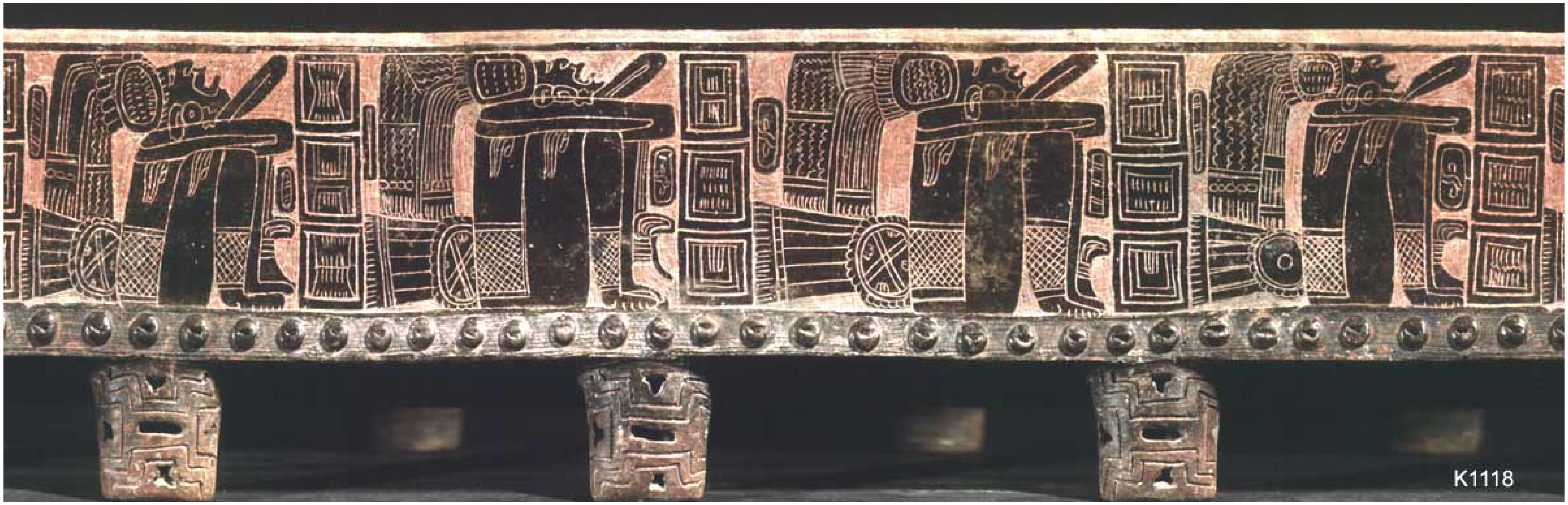


© Kerr 1980
Ht. 16.5 Dia. 15.5 Cir. 49.0 cm PY

File no K1116



© Kerr 1980
File no. K1117
Ht. 22.0 Dia. 16.0 Cir. 49.5 cm IN



© Kerr 1980
Ht. 16.0 Dia. 16.8 Cir. 52.5 cm IN

File no. K1118

© Kerr 1980
File no. K1119
Ht. 17.0 Dia. 11.5 Cir. 33.5 cm CV

May be a versiom of the sun deity

© Kerr 1980
Ht. 12.0 Dia. 13.5 Cir. 48.0 cm

File no. K1120

© Kerr 1980

File no. K1162

Ht. 8.0 Dia. 20.0 Cir. 55.0 cm PY

Stucco over blackware, bowl shown in two sections.

A version of Itzam Ye, The avian counterpart of Itzam Na

© Kerr 1980
Ht. 20.0 Dia. 17.0 Cir. 55.0 cm PY

File no. K1183

The Hero Twins Hun Ahaw and Yax Balam have an interview with Itzam Na as he comptemplates the head of their father as a skull.

© Kerr 1980 File no. K1186
Ht. 17.0 Dia. 14.5 Cir. 45.4 cm PY

© Kerr 1980 File no. K1194
Ht. 5.0 Dia. 14.8 Cir. 41.0 cm PY

© Kerr 1980
Ht. 9.7 Dia. 19.2 Cir. 29.4 cm CX

File no. K1196

This glyph relates to words having to do with omens, maladictions, and other shamonic ritual.

© Kerr 1980

File no. K1226

Ht. 11.4 Dia. 12.5 Cir. 34.0 cm CX

In a talk at Princeton in 1982, Kerr suggested that the Jaguar paw poking out from behind the tree on the above vase, aside from being the earmark of Pax, is also the symbol of Xbalanque, the brother of Hunaphu, the hero twins of the Popol Vuh. The same artist places the almost identical jaguar paw on a mask that is worn by one of the executioners on the Princeton Vase, (K511) to demonstrate, along with other symbols on their costumes, that these two are In fact the twins, Hunaphu and Xbalaque. They are in the act of cutting up one of the Lords of the Underworld.

New evidence in the form of other images has now appeared to support this theory.

It appears that Maya artists can use symbols to portray the characters they wish to depict. The scorpion as well as the Jaguar paw on this vase, may be one of these symbols.

Martin Pickands[1] suggests that ek chuuah Is the name of a type of scorpion and that It shares certain facial markings with the patron of Katun 7 who closely resembles Ek Chuuah in the Santa Rita Murals.
Kerr also postulated, in his 1982 talk[2] that the scene on vase No. 1549 represents a dance in which Xquic, the mother of the twins, Is impregnated as she holds her hand up to the phallic looking nose of Ek Chuuah. Ek Chuuah may be impersonating Hun Hunahpu. the mythical head in the tree. If indeed EK Chuuah Is a substitute for the scorpion, as well as for Hun Hunaphu, then the scorpion in the above vase represents Hun Hunaphu, the father of the twins

I - Pickands, Martin, *Vie "First Father" Legend in Maya Mythology and Iconography.* Third Palenque Roundtable, 1978. Volume V Merle Greene Robertson, Editor

2. Kerr, Justin, *The Scorpion's Tale: Abstraction and Symbolism in Maya Vase Painting.* Talk presented at the 7th Annual Maya Weekend, The University Museum, Philadelphia. April 15, 1989

© Kerr 1980

File no. K1118

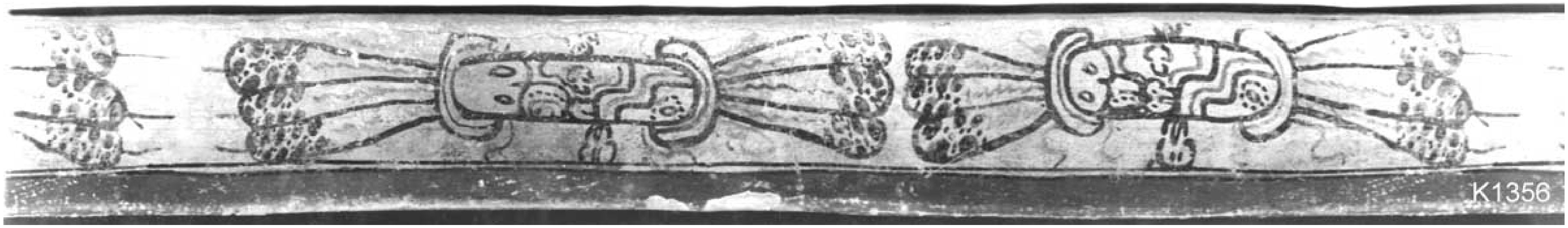
Ht. 12.5 Dia. 10.5 Cir. 37.0 cm CX.

© Kerr 1980 File no. K1353
Ht. 14.8 Dia. 17.4 Cir. 33.7 cm CX.

© Kerr 1980 File no. K1354
Ht. 11.0 Dia. 11.8 Cir. 31.5 cm CX.

© Kerr 1980
Ht. 9.5 Dia. 11.0 Cir. 30.5 cm CX.

File no. K1355

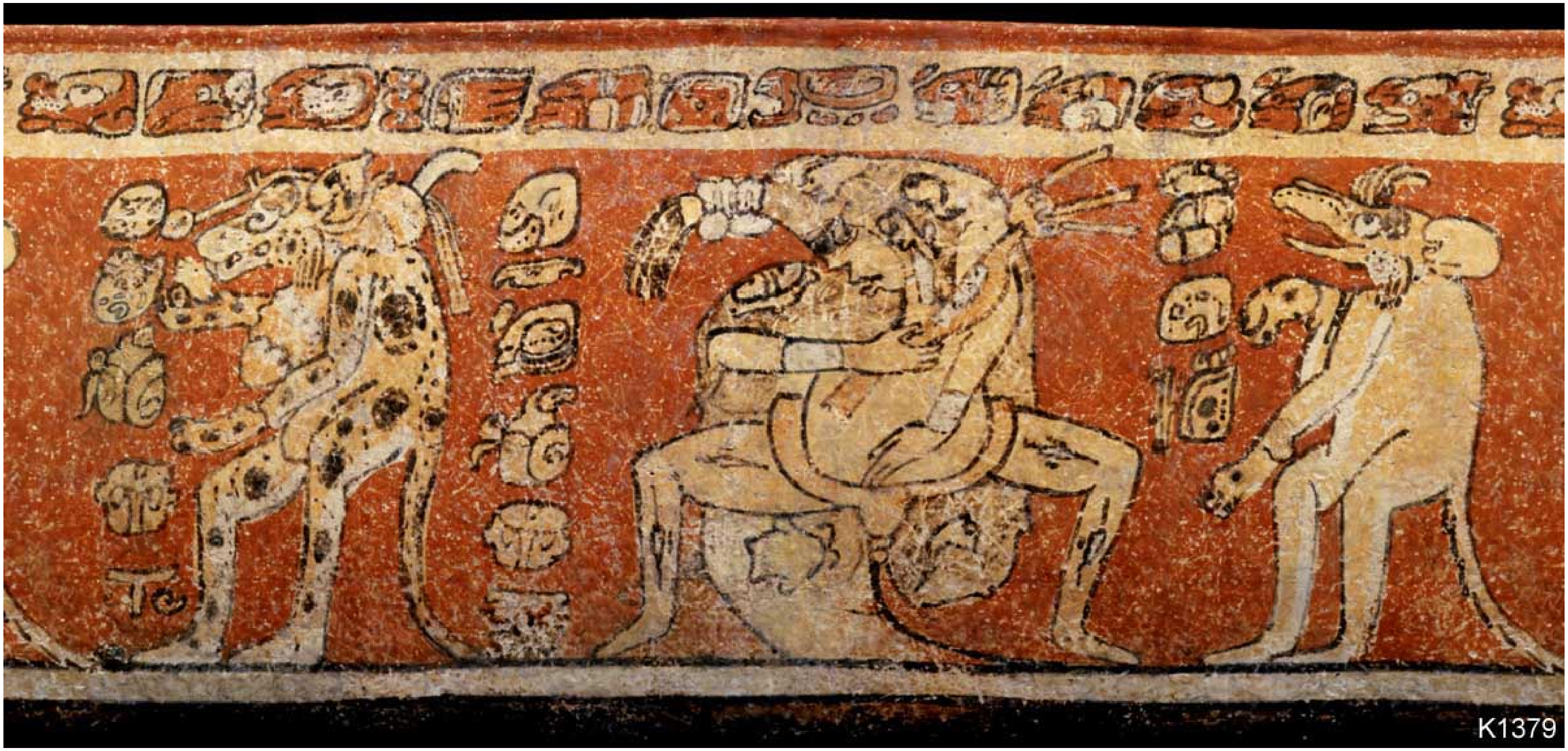


© Kerr 1980
File no. K1356
Ht. 15.0 Dia. 18.0 Cir. 51.5 cm CX

© Kerr 1980
File no. K1373
Ht. 15.0 Dia. 18.0 Cir. 51.5 cm PY

© Kerr 1980
Ht. 22.0 Dia. 15.7 Cir. 41.0 cm   CV

File no. K1378



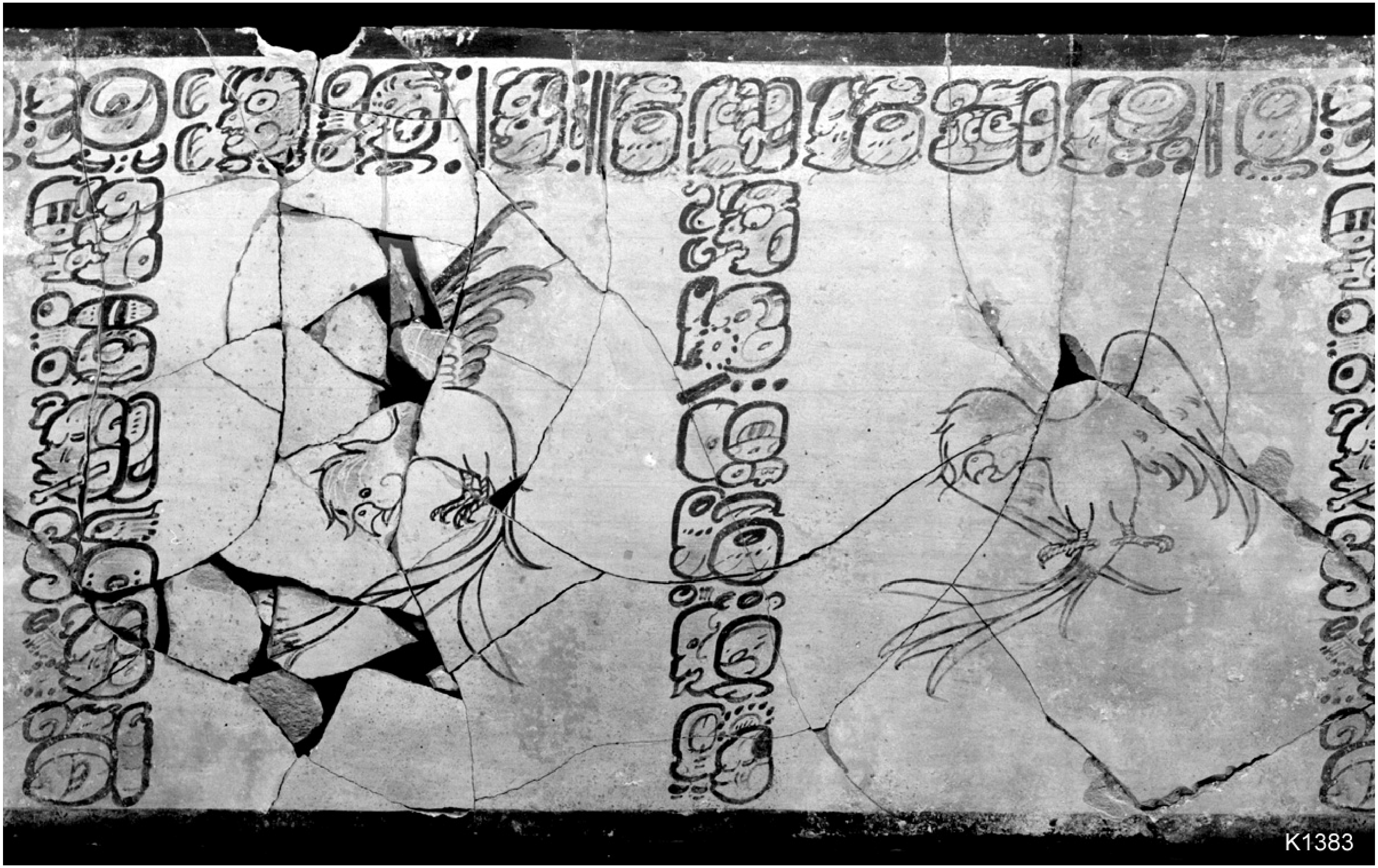
© Kerr 1980

File no. K1379

Ht. 20.0 Dia. 13.0 Cir. 39.8 cm PY

© Kerr 1980 File no. K1381
Ht. 9.5 Dia. 10.0 Cir. 29.0 cm CX

© Kerr 1980 File no. K1390
Ht. 5.2 Dia. 14.8 Cir.



© Kerr 1980
Ht. 17.0 Dia. 8.2 Cir. 27.3 cm BW

File no. K1383

See Houston, S. Problematic Eblem Glyphs:
Examples from Altar de Sacrificios, El Charro,
Rio AZul, and Xultun. in
Research Reports on Ancient Maya Writing, No. 3 October 1986

© Kerr 1980
Ht. 19.5 Dia. 14.7 Cir. 46.0 cm PY, IN

File no. K1391

© Kerr 1980
Ht. 15.8 Dia. 19.5 Cir. 60.0 cm PY

File no. K1392

One of a group of vases from the workshop of the Fenton Painter.
The Fenton Vase is in the British Museum.
See *The Blood of Kings*, pps. 170-171

© Kerr 1980

File no. K1398

Ht. 26 Dia. 13.8 Cir. 46.0 cm PY

See Johnson, Richard, Two Maya Vases: Suggested Readings of the Secondary Texts. in *U Mut Maya*, 1989 ed. Carolyn & Tom Jones

cf. K 1560

© Kerr 1980

File no. K1399

Ht. 22.0 Dia. 13.3 Cir. 41.0 cm PY

One of the few explicit views of
penis perforation

© Kerr 1981
Ht. 9.4 Dia. 25.0 Cir. 68.0 cm PY

File no. K1440

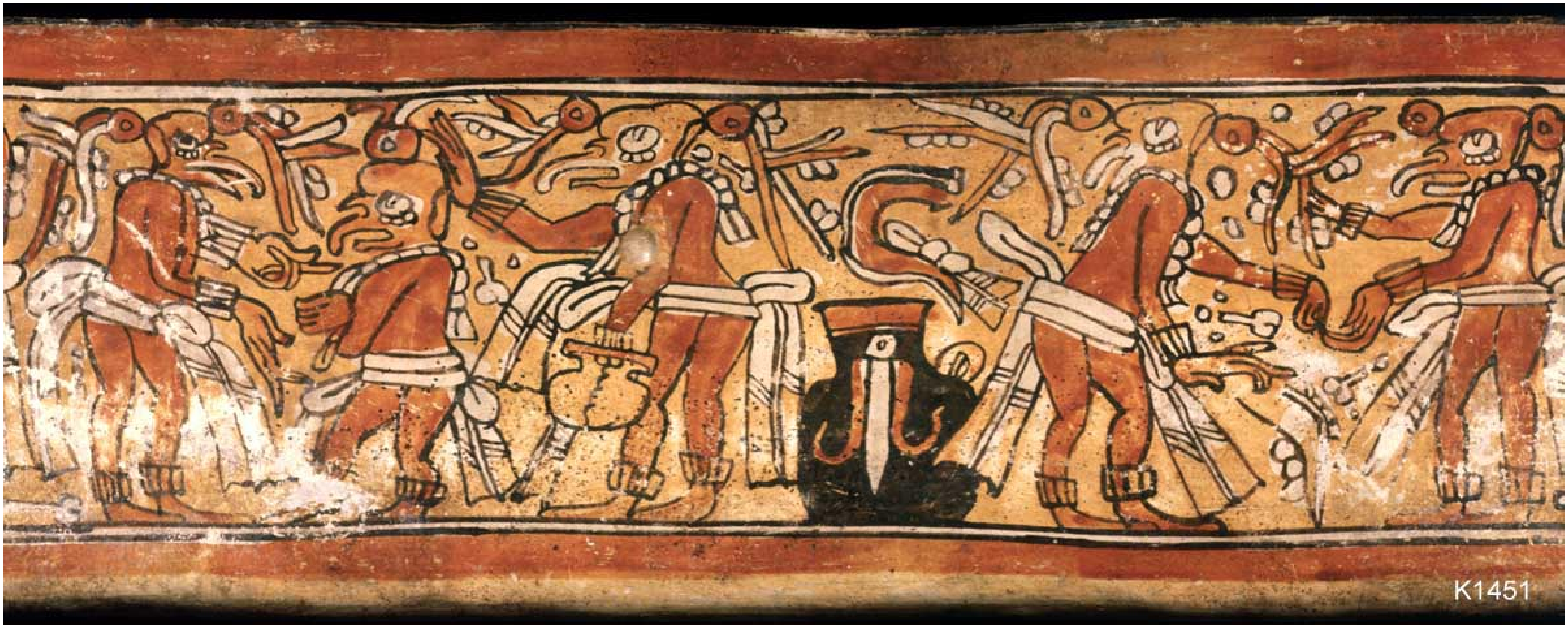
Bowl shown in two sections

© Kerr 1981

File no. K1446

Ht. 18.7 Dia. 18.8 Cir. 57.5 cm   PY

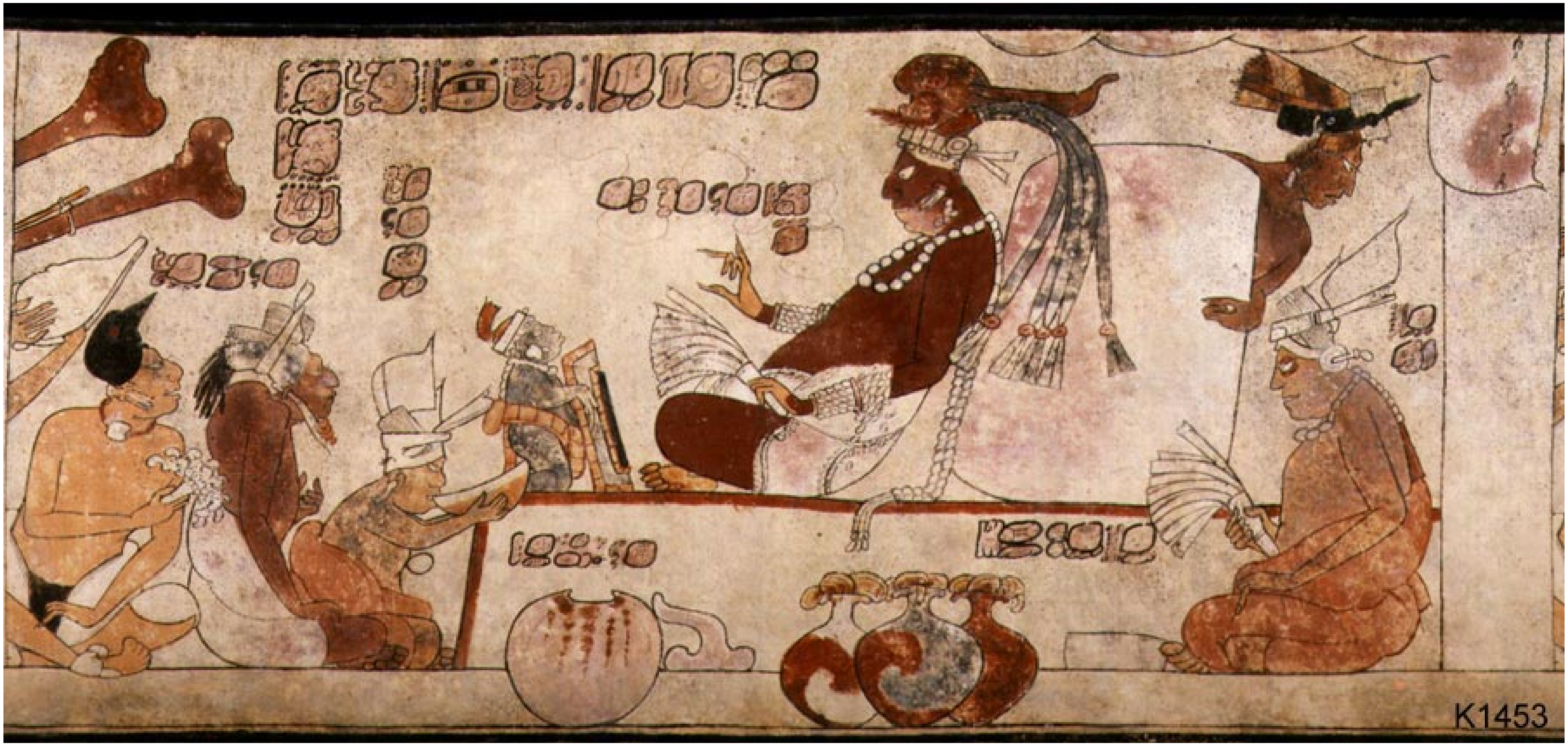
Stuccoed and Carved   The Detroit Museum of Fine Art, Detroit, MI



© Kerr 1981
Ht. 19.5 Dia. 16.0 Cir. 45.8 cm   PY

File no. K1451

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY



© Kerr 198

File no. K1454

Ht. 20.0 Dia. 13.5 Cir. 41.0 cm PY

The dwarf is drinking a brew made from fermented honey.

© Kerr 1981

File no. K1454

Ht. 20.0 Dia. 13.5 Cir. 41.0 cm   PY

© Kerr 1981
Ht. 12.5 cm PY

File no. K1456

© Kerr 1981
Ht. 10.5 Dia. 10.0 Cir. 30.0 cm PY

File no. K1463

The Fat Cacique wears a war badge.

© Kerr 1981

File no. K1485

Ht. 25.0 Dia. 11.5 Cir. 40.0 cm   PY

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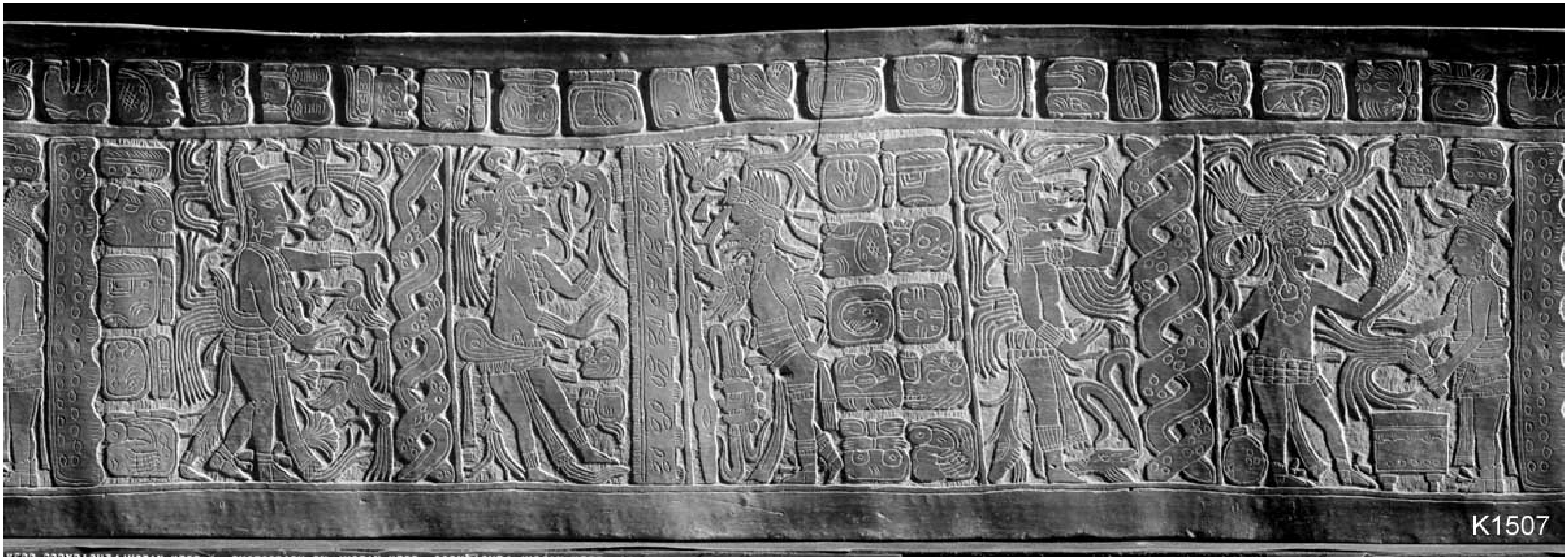
Ht. 23.0 Dia. 18.0 Cir. 55.0 cm PY

File no. K1490

© Kerr 1981

File no. K1498

Ht. 18.0 Dia. 12.0 Cir. 32.0 cm PY



© Kerr 1981
Ht. 19.0 Dia. 21.2 Cir. 56.0 cm IN CV

File no. K1507

© Kerr 1981
Ht. 20.0 Dia. 13.5 Cir. 43.0 cm PY

File no. K1524

Stucco surface, much of which has fallen off

© Kerr 1981

File no. K1534

Ht. 16.5 Dia. 15.3 Cir. 47.0 cm   PY

Stucco surface

© Kerr 1981
Ht. 18.0 Dia. 11.0 Cir. 34.0 cm PY

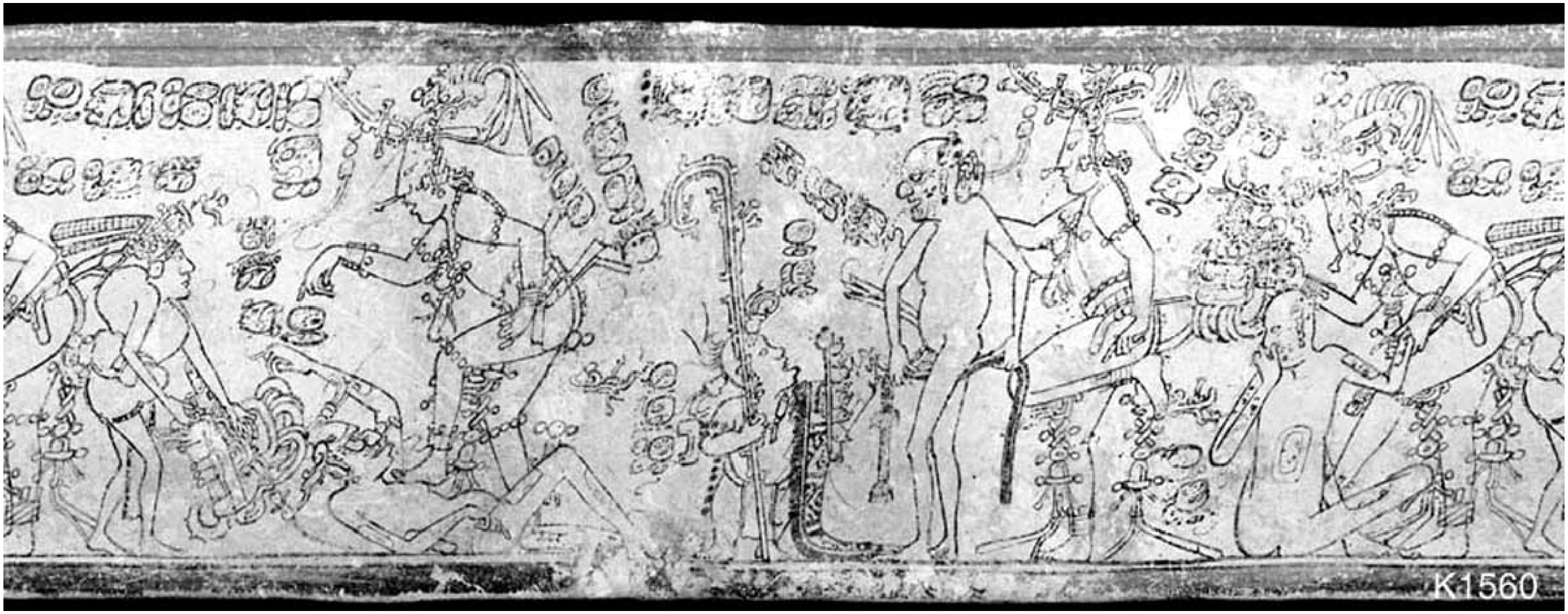
File no. K1549

A comic dance celebrating the
impregnation of Xquic,
the mother of the Hero Twins.

© Kerr 1981
Ht. 17.5 Dia. 13.3 Cir. 38.5 cm CV

File no. K1550

See Stross B. & Kerr J.,
Notes on the the Maya Vision Quest
Through Enema in
The Maya Vase Book, Volume 2.

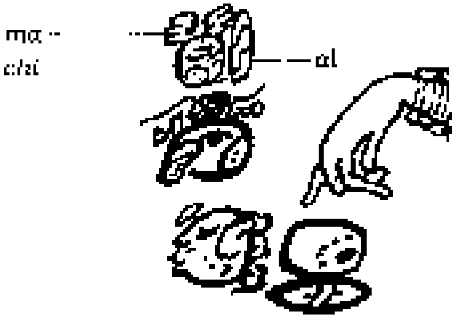


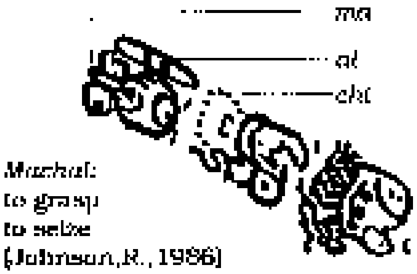
© Kerr 1981
Ht. 16.3 Dia. 15.0 Cir. 41.5 cm CX

File no. K1560

After the resurrection of Hun Hunaphu (Hun Nal Ye), the Young Corn God, see K1892, the Young Corn God takes away the power of the Lords of the Underworld.

See Johnson, Richard, Two Maya Vases: Suggested Readings of the Secondary Texts. in *U Mut Maya*, 1989 ed. Carolyn & Tom Jones
cf. K 1398





© Kerr 1981
Ht. 21.5 Dia. 26.6 Cir. 72.0 cm PY

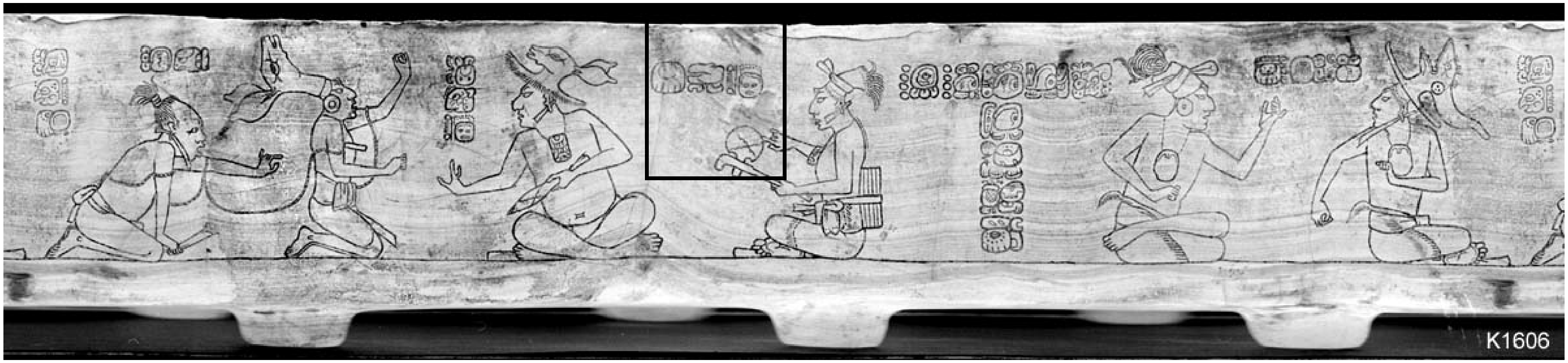
File no. K1563

© Kerr 1981
Ht. 18.2 Dia. 13.0 Cir. 39.0 cm PY

File no. K1599

See Reents, D. & Bishop, R., History and Ritual Events
on a Petexbatun Clasic Maya Vessel in
The Fifth Palenque Round Table, 1983, Vol. VII
General Editor, Merle Greene Robertson,
Volume Editor, Virgina Fields.

© Kerr 1981
File no. K1605
Ht. 19.0 Dia. 14.0 Cir. 40.0 cm CV



© Kerr 1981
File no. K1524
Ht. 14.5 Dia. 24.8 Cir. 66.5 cm CV Travertine

The area marked on the rollout has been restored.

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Ht. 17.0 Dia. 13.4 Cir. 38.5 cm PY

File no. K1669

© Kerr 1981
Ht. 17.5 Dia. 17.5 Cir. 51.0 cm PY

File no. K1670

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File no. K1524
Ht. 20.0 Dia. 13.5 Cir. 43.0 cm   PY

© Kerr 1981
Ht. 17.1 Dia. 14.3 Cir. 43.2 cm   PY

File no. K1728

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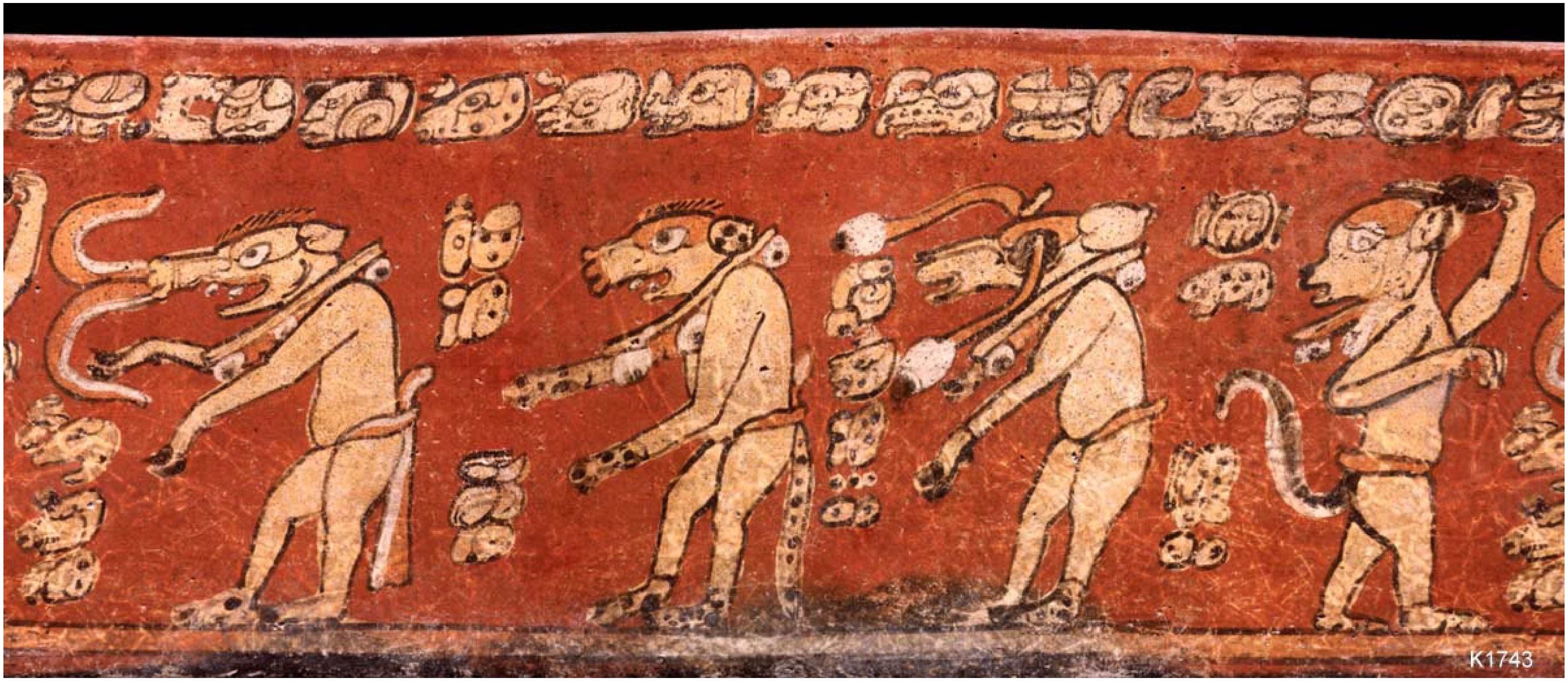
File no. K1734
Ht. 13.0 Dia. 12.4 Cir. 37.5 cm PY



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File no. K1743
Ht. 16.3 Dia. 11.4 Cir. 35.5 cm PY

The Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC
Museum no. 84.212.15

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File no. K1774

Ht. 19.0 Dia. 15.1 Cir. 50.5 cm PY

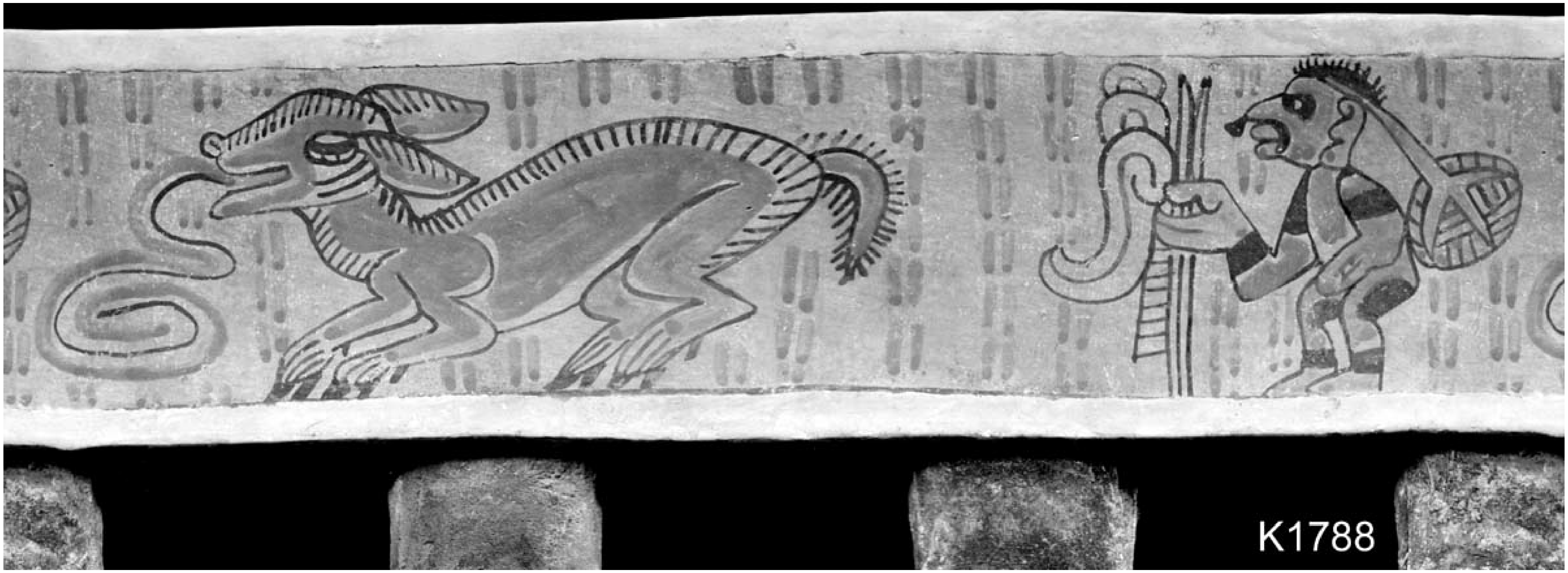
The scene suggests that point in the Popol Vuh where the Lords of the Underworld send messages to the Young Corn God and his brother to come to Xibalba to play ball.

© Kerr 1982
Ht. 17.8 Dia. 18.6 Cir. 47.3 cm   PY

File no. K1775

© Kerr 1982
Ht. 21.2 Dia. 12.2 Cir. 39.6 cm PY

File no. K1782



© Kerr 1982
Ht. 15 Dia. 13.5 Cir. 4\39.5

File no. K1788

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Ht. 15.0 Dia. 18.2 Cir. 56.5 cm PY

File no. K1789

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Ht. 21.0 Dia. 16.5 Cir. 52.0 cm PY

File no. K1792

© Kerr 1982
Ht. 14.0 Cir. 54.0 cm CV

File no. K1814

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Ht. 8.2 Dia. 12.6 Cir. 68.5 cm PY

File no. K1834

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File no. K1835

Ht. 20.5 Dia. 12.6 Cir. 3.6.0 cm PY

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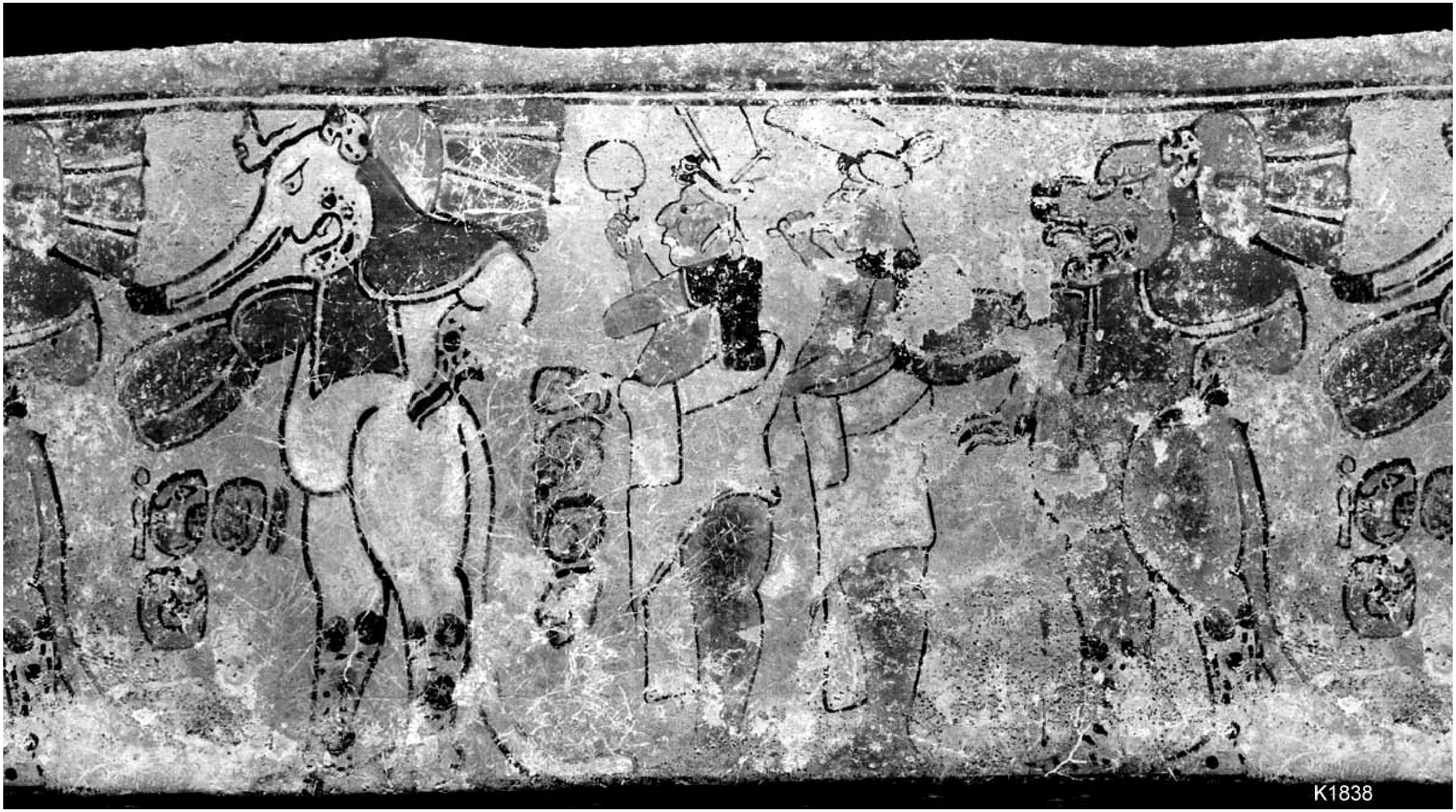
File no. K1837

Ht. 21.3 Dia. 18.5 Cir. 56.1 cm PY



© Kerr 1982
Ht. 17.0 Dia. 9.4 Cir. 30.1 cm PY

File no. K1838

© Kerr 1982
Ht. 9.8 Dia. 5.4 Cir. 17.5 cm CV

File no. K1839

One of a series of green stone vases
found filled with cinnabar.

© Kerr 1982

File no. K1871

Ht. 20.5 Dia. 15.5 Cir. 48.0 cm PY

National Museum of the American Indian,
Smithsonian no. 24/6503

The remnants of chest yokes have been found in Tikal.

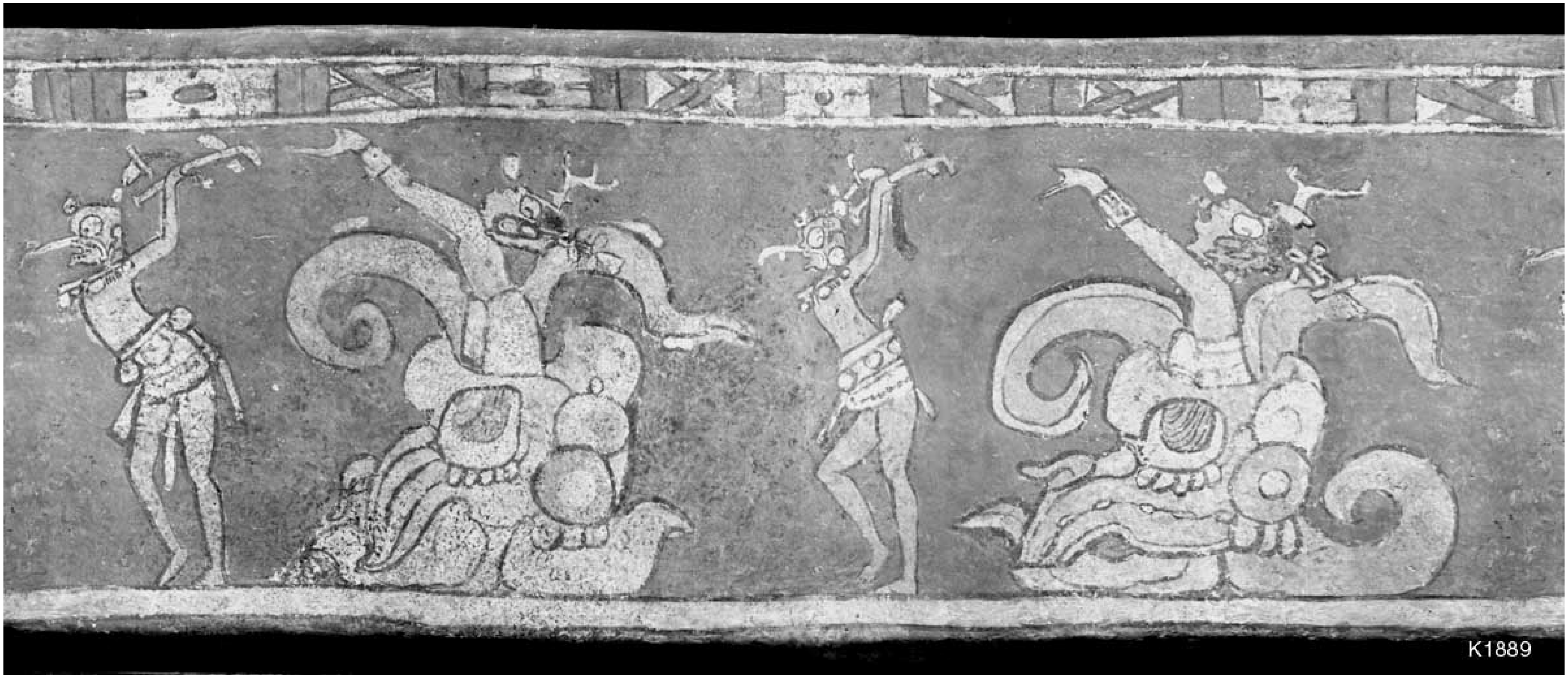
K1873

© Kerr 1982

File no. K1873

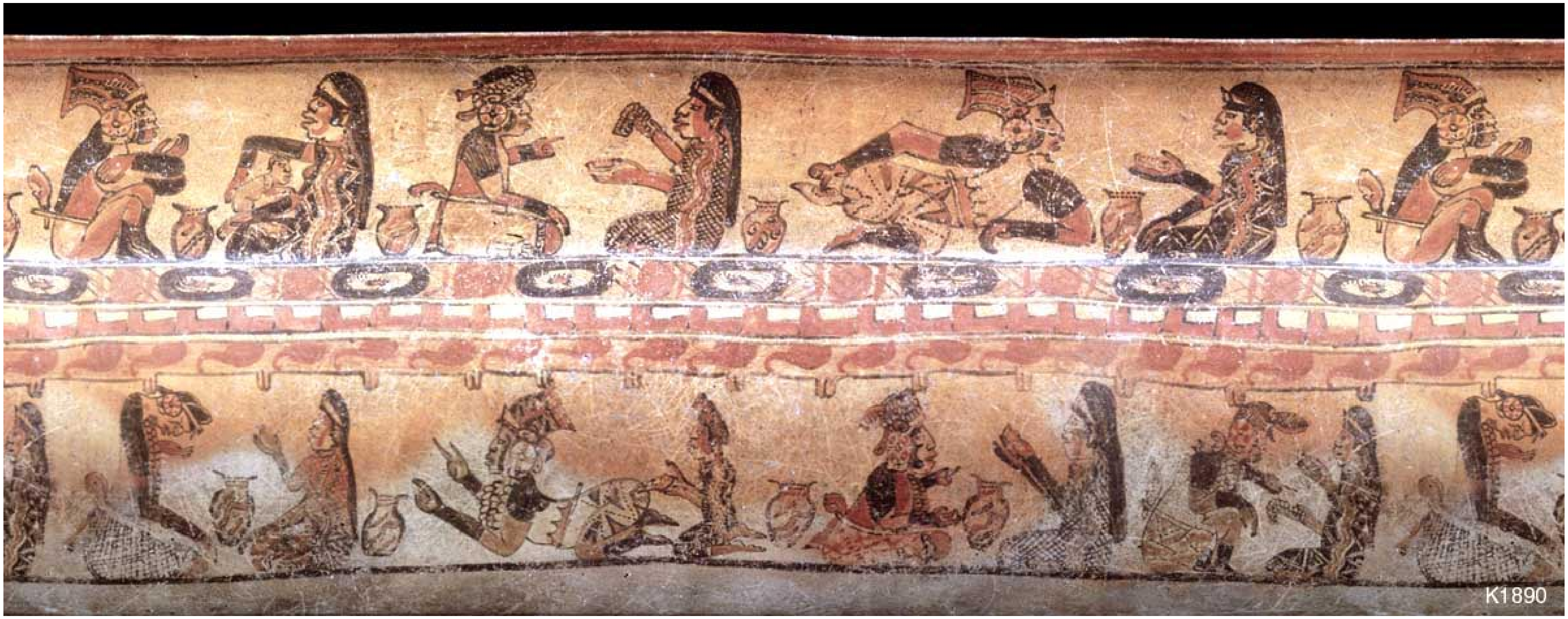
Ht. 10.2 Dia. 29.0 Cir. 83.5 cm PY

Bowl shown in two sections



© Kerr 1982
Ht. 18.0 Dia. 13.5 Cir. 42.0 cm PY

File no. K1889



© Kerr 1982

File no. K1890

Ht. 28.8 Dia. 22.0 Cir. 72.1 cm PY

See Furst, P. & Coe, M. Ritual Enemas, in *Natural History* 1977, Vol. 86, no.3

Smet, P. Ritual Enemas and Snuffs in the Americas in *Latin American Studies*, no. 3

Stross, B. & Kerr, J. Notes on the Maya Vision Quest Through Enemas in The Maya Vase Book, Vol 2

© Kerr 1982
File no. K1896
Ht. 22.0 Dia. 12.2 Cir. 41.7 cm PY

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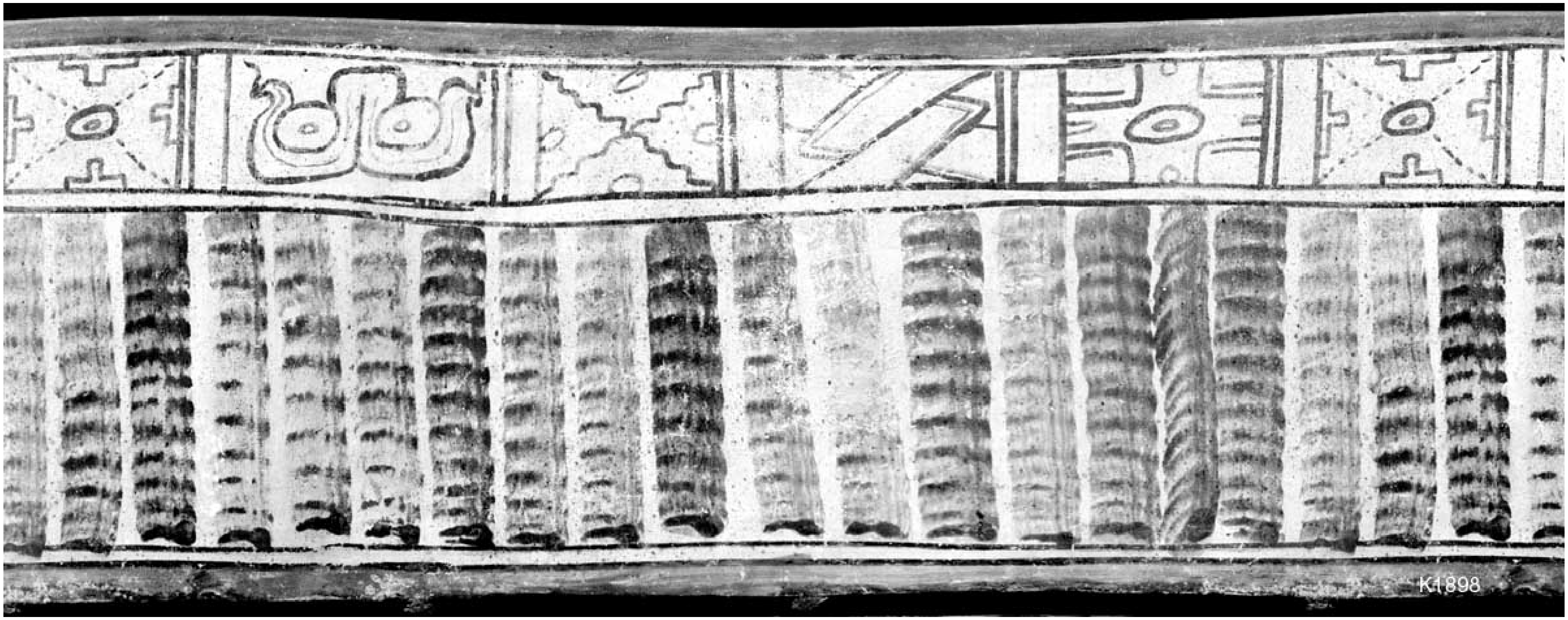
File no. K1897
Ht. 7.8 Dia. 20.8 Cir. 59.0 cm PY



© Kerr 1982
File no. K1898
Ht. 15.0 Dia. 10.5 Cir. 33.3 cm PY

© Kerr 1982
File no. K1899
Ht. 12.5 Dia. 11.5 Cir. 34.5 cm PY

© Kerr 1982
File no. K1900
Dia. 17.0 CX

Flat dish with slightly curved sides

© Kerr 1982
Ht. 16.5 Dia. 14.5 Cir. 52

File no. K1901

© Kerr 1981
Ht. 20.0 Dia. 13.5 Cir. 43.0 cm PY.0 cm PY

File no. K1524

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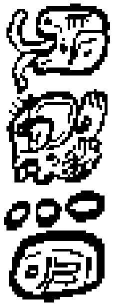
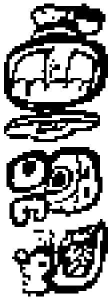
See Schele's essay (this volume), and Spero and Kerr, *VII Mesa Redonda de Palenque*, 1989 for a discussion of Deer Serpent .





The Essays

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THE HISTORY OF THE STUDY OF MAYA VASE PAINTING

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As one would expect, the study of Classic Maya vase painting has followed the discovery and collection of Classic Maya pottery. That collection has generally been the result of one of two processes: one, the collection of Maya vases by private collectors and museums, and two, the excavation of vessels by archaeologists under controlled conditions. The two phenomena do overlap: some vessels excavated by archaeologists have ended up in museum collections, and some found by pothunters have been of use to archaeologists. In general, however, the conditions of the excavation of Maya vessels have frequently determined the treatment they received. After the passage of long periods of time, the difference in the treatment of the vessels recedes. Finely painted vessels, regardless of their means of excavation, eventually end up in museums where they are written about by art historians or by anthropologists interested in their meaning

John Lloyd Stephens may have been the first to comment on Maya vases, just as he was the first to write and publish about so many other aspects of ancient Maya life and art. While Stephens was staying in Micul, Yucatan, a townsman lent him a vase so that Frederick Catherwood might draw it At the time, Stephens regretted not being able to acquire the object himself, but after a fire had destroyed the collection of antiquities he took home to the United States, he was relieved that he had only been lent the object for examination (Stephens 1843,1: 271-275). He noted in particular the band of glyphs around the rim. Which, he identified as part of the same wilting system he had seen at Palenque and Copán, and he also thought that the figural representation bore a resemblance to stone monuments at these places (Figure 1).

Figure 1

After Stephens and Catherwood had completed their travels in the Maya region in 1842, the Maya were avidly studied by others. Teobert Maler, Alfred P. Maudslay, and other nineteenth century explorers, however, did not encounter finely carved or painted vessels at the Maya sites that they visited. Both found modern Lacandon pots In the Usumacinta ruins, and Maudslay retrieved some simple pots from a Palenque tomb (1889-1902, 5: 36). Maudslay was also familiar with the finely painted vessels from Guatemala that E. P. Dieseldorff (called J. Dieseldorf by Maudslay) was publishing at the same time Maudslay 1889-19OZ 5: 38). In the 1880s, Desirè Charnay sought Maya pots in Yucatan but finally had to accept them from another source when his own efforts to excavate some from a mound did not pan out. He had little good to say about Maya ceramics, but he did note the similarity between pots dug from a mound in Yucatan and a vessel from Teotihuacan. "The resemblance between the ceramic art of Yucatan and that of the table-land [i.e., Central Mexico] is seen at a glance. Their value as works of art is nil, but the peculiar ornamentation, common to all, cannot be

over-estimated from the point of view of our theory. On examining this pottery, it is found that the potter made the vases with reliefs, which he coloured, varnished. and baked before he gave them to a carver who sculptured devices and figures with a flint chisel" (Charnay 1888: 376, illustration on p. 375) Charnay was obviously not acquainted with the means of pottery manufacture. but he nevertheless isolated shared traits that served his theory of a shared "Toltec" heritage for all of Mesoamerica. From Charnay's time onward, studies of pottery were often used to hypothesize diffusions of culture throughout Mesoamerica.

During the late nineteenth century, many Germans came to Guatemala to establish coffee fincas. Among them E. P. Dieseldorff, who acquired a ranch in Coban and shared with his countrymen Eduard Seler, Ernst Förstemann, and Paul Schellhas an interest in Maya antiquities. He collected Maya objects from farmers, laborers, and travelers. In 1892, he directed excavations at Chamá; and he built a collection for himself and the Berlin Museum. (Note 1) He published articles on two particularly important Chamá pots, and his publication provoked essays from his German colleagues. Although Dieseldorff was interested in the archaeological context, his concern was largely for the meaning of the imagery and style of painting. He was the first, I believe, to make "roll-out" drawings of Maya pots, in which the images from a cylinder vessel were extended onto a sheet of paper. With such a drawing, all the figures and hieroglyphs could be easily labeled for reference, and a narrative scene could be viewed at a glance.

The relationship of highland Guatemala to the lowland Maya not known at the time and Dieseldorff's finds were the first to show. Based on the hieroglyphs, that the Maya at Chamá had written in the same writing system as did the Maya at Palenque--much as Stephens had used hieroglyphic writing to show relationships fifty years before. Dieseldorff used Bishop Landa's Relación and the Popol Vuh to interpret the scene and hieroglyphs on the Chamá vase (Kerr #2894). which he believed to be a scene of sacrifice attended by Ahpops. Ernst Förstemann followed Dieseldorff's interpretation of the scene and further elucidated the glyphs, noting, for example, the glyph ahau, or lord, as the fourth in the column behind figure f and probably naming him (1904: 649). Both Förstemann and Dieseldorff were struck by the fact that the pot had never been used before its interment and that it showed a scene of daily life. In response, Eduard Seler, writing with greater academic authority and conviction, tackled the problem of the pot (Seler 1904). He faulted the previous interpretations, and he argued, by analogy with later arts of the Aztec and Mixtec, that the fans carried on the Chamá vase characterized long-distance traders. Onthe basis of this identification, all fans in Maya art were long regarded as attributes of traders, and many misidentifications were made (KurbJuhn 1976). He also-correctly, I believe--identified the basic gestures of the figures on the pot as appropriate ones for arrival, reception, and, in the case of the kneeling figure of humble salute (cf. V. Miller 1982). He further proposed that the glyphic captions offered the "title and name of the person in question" (Seler 1904: 661). Seler also suspected that the entire corpus of Maya writing might treat astronomy (he wondered whether the pot might

show Venus gods), but he found this somewhat in contradiction to the realism of this particular vase painting (Seler 1904: 662).

Such attention to the meaning and interpretation of Maya Imagery and writing were the preoccupation of the German school, as we might term it, of the turn of the century. Dieseldorff continued his collecting, writing, and interpretation (Dieseldorff 1926-33). but the ideas and writings of Eduard Seler were the more prominent ones. Seler increasingly turned his attention to Central Mexico. No German expedition to excavate a Maya site materialized, and, following in the steps of Förstemann and Seler, most subsequent German Mayanists worked on the problems of Maya writing, calendar and iconography (cf. Beyer, Zimmermann, Berlin. Barthel, and Dütting).

Whole painted and carved pots, as well as potsherds, were first systematically collected at the major Classic site of Copán by Harvard's Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in the 1890s and it is here that the history of archaeological collection and study begins. Frederick W. Putnam, director of the Peabody Museum, had already instituted a program of careful stratigraphy in North American excavations; by means of his students, this method was introduced to the Maya region. In their reports. Copán archaeologists Marshall Saville and J.G. Owens described tombs and their contents but made no attempt to determine stratigraphy or meaning, their final reports are limited to straight description (in Gordon 1896). Following Honduras government's termination of the Peabody Museum project at Copán In 1896, George B. Gordon turned his attention to the archaeology of the Ulua Valley. In his study (1898), he published rolled-out drawings and attempted to determine diffusion into the Ulua Valley of 'foreign' Maya influences (1898: 39). His interest in the Maya, like that of his contemporary, William H. Holmes of the Smithsonian Institution, was extremely broad. He wanted to know the techniques of ancient pottery manufacture, the distribution of decorative motifs, and the meaning of iconography. We now recognize that this first large corpus of pots, some from Copán and more from the Ulua Valley, are not characteristic of Maya pottery in general.

Following the work at Copán, few systematic excavations were carried out in the Maya area for many years. But here and there, an occasional pot was happened upon. In highland Guatemala, particularly in the region of Ratlinxul, Chamá, and Nebaj, farmers, amateurs, and pothunters encountered a number of finely painted pots which came to the attention of collectors and scholars. The "Fenton Vase," for example, was excavated at Nebaj in 1904, whence it came Into the hands of the English collector C.L Fenton for whom it is named.

Herbert J. Spinden submitted his dissertation, *A Study of Maya Art,* to the faculty of Anthropology at Harvard University in 1909, and it was published as a memoir of the Peabody Museum In 1913. He studied the known corpus of Maya art, including ceramics, which he included as a nine-page subsection of his chapter, "A Consideration of the Material Arts- (Spinden 1913: 133-142). Spinden treated technique and acknowledged the usefulness of pottery in establishing a chronological sequence, but in general, he was most concerned with

the representation and decoration of the pottery. His sample included the excavated pots from Copán as well as those collected for the Peabody Museum by travelers and pothunters; he also used any vessels of interest known to him in private collections. He praised the workmanship of carved and stamped wares--which formed the preponderance of his sample, of course, since those are found in Yucatán, the part of the Maya region most frequented by early visitors and where a resident population was more likely to encounter objects in mounds- but he reserved his highest praise for polychrome pottery particularly for those examples from Chamá that Dieseldorff had published, and for other specimens that had come into the hands of the Peabody Museum.

In 19 18, Thomas Gann, a British physician, published the results of his years of excavating, collecting, and study in Belize [then British Honduras] and the southern part of the Mexican territory of Quintana Roo (Gann 1918). He himself excavated a number of fine pots, including one from Rio Hondo sometimes known as the Gann Vase. Thompson 1939.1970; Hammond 1985), and two others from a nearby mound, one of which was published by Gordon and Mason (Gann 1918: Plate 17)--as was the Gann Vase (see below). He also bought a number of pots from the mayor of Yalloch, El Peten, who had found them some years before in what Gann describes as a chultun or underground storage pit (Garm 1918. 138), but which might have been a partly collapsed tomb. Gann compared his finds to the few known published Maya pots, and he attempted to identify the figures and some glyphs on the vases with the gods sorted out by Paul Schellhas (1904); he correctly identified God D. Itzamna, for example, on one of the Yalloch pots (1918: Plate 23). He related the Yalloch pots to Naranjo, which is indeed their logical source, and he paid close attention to the patterns of wear on individual pots. Gann was an amateur archaeologist, but he was also a collector for museums, among them, the Bristol Museum, which acquired the Yalloch pots.

In 1919, the Museum of the American Indian in New York acquired a sculptured vase from Acasaguastlan Guatemala (Kerr #2776; Saville 1919), from the collection of the German Consul General in Guatemala City. Saville noted that the "vase is without question the most beautiful example of earthenware ever found in either North or South America," a claim still difficult to dispute. He compared its carving to monumental stone and wood carving at Quirigua and Tikal, and while acknowledging its complexity and importance, he defended "a comparative study and an analysis" for a later date (Saville 1919: n.p). J. Eric S. Thompson later confided to Frederick Dockstader that the unusual carved vessel was surely a fake (personal communication from Michael Coe, December 1988), and perhaps Thompson's misapprehension of the pot was what condemned it to scholarly obscurity for a long time. Not surprisingly, the only serious consideration of the pot In the early twentieth century came from Hermann Beyer, who analyzed the Acasaguastlan Vase in light of the Aztec Calendar Stone (Beyer 192 1).

By 1925, there were enough painted and carved Maya pots for George B. Gordon and J. Alden Mason to undertake their three-volume corpus, *Examples of Maya* Pottery in the

Museum and other Collections, luxuriously printed folios in full color. Mary Louise Baker, Annie Hunter, and other artists made color drawings of the pots, Including rollout drawings. Despite its lavish production and limited distribution, the Gordon and Mason volumes, published between 1925 and 1943, were known for many years as the standard corpus of Maya vases. That corpus included examples of the pots mentioned above--Chamá, Copán, Nebaj, Yalloch, Rio Hondo-- with attention to those in other collections: the Fenton Collection, the Berlin Museum für Volkerkunde, and an occasional example from Mexican or Guatemalan collections. One vessel in the corpus is fake (Plate LVII), as Mason himself suspected ("of doubtful authenticity," he noted). To my eye, this fake vessel seems to be closely related to the Maya Art Deco of the 1920s and 1930s (cf. Ingle 1985). Conspicuously absent from the volumes were the Holmul pots, whose separate publication was in progress by the Peabody Museum (see below) and the Acasaguastlan Vase of the Museum of the American Indian. Black and white line drawings were made from the color rollouts and reproduced in popular literature and in such widely read books on the Maya as Sylvanus G. Morley's *The Ancient Maya* (1946). In the Gordon and Mason publications, no general comments were offered about Maya vases, but the very richness of the publication presented them as art, not artifact.

In 1910-11, Raymond E. Merwin had conducted extensive excavations at Holmul. Guatemala, and there he had -collected for the Peabody Museum ... ceramic masterpieces of the Maya" (Spinden 1913: 141). During this era, archaeology was still equated with acquisition for a foreign museum, such as Harvards Peabody Museum, just as ethnography was equated with the acquisition of a non-Industrial society's religious and magical objects for a museum. (Note 2) Merwin completed his dissertation in 1913, and then George Vaillant submitted his dissertation in 1927 on the ceramics from Holmul. Merwin's III health delayed publication of the excavations and pots until 1932, when George Vaillant had completed their joint study. In it, Vaillant published the design he had used in the dissertation for the first sequence of lowland Maya pottery that was correlated to the Maya Long Count calendar and thus, in turn, to our own calendar. Vaillant is better known for his work in the Valley of Mexico, but his Holmul sequence has formed the basis for all subsequent ceramic sequences in the Maya area, even when not acknowledged by modem Maya archaeologists. Although some of the 90-odd Holmul pots are extremely interesting for their complex iconography and beautiful painting, Vaillant felt that the "pottery found at Holmul is extremely important because of its chronological implications."

But Vaillant was a museum curator (American Museum of Natural History) and collector as well as an archaeologist, so he also sought to interpret the pots in some other frame. Based on what was, by the time of publication in 1932, still a very limited sample of known Maya pots, Vaillant established three broad schools of painting. 1) Copán-Motagua, 2) Pusilha-Uaxactun, and 3) Holmul-Yalloch (Merwin and Vaillant 1932: 78-83). Vaillant made a very prescient prediction: 'it might," he

wrote, "be possible, through associated trade wares. to find a fixed point in Mexican history, and with these external dates to work backward into a fixed point in Mexican history" (1932: 79). Starting in 1936, at Kaminaljuyu, AN. Kidder began to excavate tombs that produced just such trade wares (Kidder, Jennings, and Shook 1946). From the Teotihuacan style pots he found he was able to show the simultaneity of the Early Classic Maya and Teotihuacan. It was the first concrete dating of Teotihuacan and it helped establish the attribution of Tula. Hidalgo, as the home of the great Toltec predecessors of the Aztec by showing Teotihuacan to be earlier. When in 1941 Vaillant published his great life's work, *The Aztecs of Mexico*, he followed earlier assumptions which placed the Toltecs at Teotihuacan. Alas, today he is often remembered more for such misapprehensions than for his fundamental contribution to the establishment of a Maya ceramic sequence.

In 1926, the Carnegie Institution of Washington began 11 years of systematic excavations at Uaxactun, Guatemala. To Oliver G. Ricketson, A. Leyard Smith, and Robert E. Smith, the recovery of pots from tombs located in stratigraphic sequence to one another afforded an opportunity to provide the basis for temporal distinctions within the Classic period. The correlation of the Maya calendar with the Christian calendar that established the years A.D. 300-900 as the Classic had been accepted, but the nature of change during that era was not known. At Uaxactun, the archaeologists retrieved hundreds of pots from tombs, burials, caches, and other offerings. In the years before radiocarbon dating, through association with dated monuments, the ceramics, too, could be given secure dates, and they could then be used, in turn to date architecture without associated dated sculpture. Gordon R. Willey and Jeremy Sabloff have referred to this period of American archaeology as the "Classificatory-Historical Period" and have noted that its greatest concern was for chronology (Willey and Sabloff 1980: 83). Robert E. Smith studied the Uaxactun ceramics carefully, reviewed Vaillant's Holmul sequence, and named the basic ceramic periods still used today: Tzakol 1. 2, and 3 for the Early Classic (AD 250-550) and Tepeu 1, 2, and 3 for the Late Classic (AD 600-900). He clearly considered pottery to be most important as an archaeological tool for dating architecture, but he was also interested in the information yielded by vessels: "Their structure and decoration provided gauges of the Uaxactun potters' development of technical and artistic ability during the city's long life. From paintings and carvings on vases and bowls of the later periods, when depiction of the human figure came into vogue much was learned about the appearance of the people, their costumes, ornaments, weapons, implements, and particularly their ceremonial regalia" (1955 1: 11). In other words, Smith sought to retrieve information of archaeological and anthropological value from the pots, but he made no attempt to discuss their intrinsic meanings. No comprehensive study was ever made of the inscriptions on the pottery, perhaps because by the time of publication in 1955, both Sylvanus G. Morley and J. Eric S. Thompson had made a powerful argument that they were meaningless.

In a separate publication, 'Two Recent Ceramic Finds at Uaxactun," A. Ledyard Smith discussed several Uaxactun pots of extraordinary beauty and iconography shortly after their excavation in 1931 (Smith 1932). The pots themselves included the Initial Series Vase, the Uaxactun Dancer Plate, and the Underworld Jaguar Plate, but Smith evinced no particular point of view about them other than to note that they "have much esthetic interest." Morley commented on the inscription of the Initial Series Vase, which although in error from his point of view, seemed to him to be in distinction from most glyphs on pots, which he believed 'to have degenerated into purely decorative elements" (Smith 1932: 21). Morley, as usual, although full of praise for the object ("the most important example of ancient Maya ceramics yet brought to light"), had little to say about the vessel as a work of art.

In his great, synthetic 1946 book, *The Ancient Maya.* Sylvanus G. Morley devoted a chapter (Chapter 15, "Ceramics: pottery. the best guide to cultural development") to Maya pots (Morley 1946:382404) in this chapter. Morley treated Maya ceramics essentially for their technical properties (shape, temper, slip) and for their value to the archaeologist in establishing chronology. Morley wrote one of the clearest explications of how pottery is useful to the archaeologist and cultural historian that has ever been written for the Maya.

However, Morley treated the nature of painting on Maya vases in a subsequent chapter, as part of "Miscellaneous Arts and Crafts," under the subsection "Painting." Few monumental paintings were known-- Bonampak was only found in 1946, the year Morley's book was published- so he could write that 'by far the best paintings of the Old Empire that have come to light are the polychrome vases and bowls of the Great Period found at Uaxactun, at Holmul, and in the Chamá region along the upper Chixoy River" (1946: 415). Morley reiterated the Interpretation of the Initial Series Vase of Uaxactun that he had made a decade earlier. Curiously, Morley claimed that this same Uaxactun "tomb contained other polychrome vessels of equal beauty," a claim one might well dispute, particularly based on the poorly drawn Illustrations provided by Morley himself (Morley 1946: Figs. 49-5 1) By 1950 and the publication of his *Maya Hieroglyphic Writing.* Thompson had come to a conclusion that he and Morley shared, and It shaped a generation of thinking about Maya vase painting: "Hieroglyphs painted on pottery vessels appear to have been largely decorative" (1950: 27). He believed that many glyphs formed ornamental borders, and he found the "senseless mistakes of a rather singular nature' in calendrical notations proof that the "artist who painted the details was ignorant of hieroglyphic writing" (1950: 27).

In his determination of the Copán ceramic sequence from the wares collected during the Carnegie excavations of the 1930s in comparison with the 1890s excavations, John A Longyear III analyzed the glyphic notations on Copán pots. He suggested that the Copador pottery texts "intended at least to imitate glyphs" (1952:61) and the carved and incised pots were made by artists "not familiar enough with the glyphs to reproduce them except from a copy prepared by one of the priests" (1952:65). He astutely noted that the Quetzal Vase from the 19th century Peabody excavations bore a rim text nearly

identical to the rim text of the Gann Vase and surmised that "one was obviously copied from the other, or both were patterned after a third specimen" (1952: 64).

The recognition of such patterning was ultimately important to Maya vase painting studies, but for the meantime, the discovery seemed to fuel the notion that the glyphs on pots were not readable. "Certain glyphs were much favored by the decorators of pottery and are repeated over and over again," wrote Thompson in the introduction to his 1962 A *Catalog* of *Maya Hieroglyphs* (1962: 15). "It is surely significant that among the glyphs particularly favored by potters and copied from one pot to another are the monkey, a fish and a bird, glyphs easily recognized by the illiterate" (1962: 16). Thompson also considered what he interpreted as errors in the inscription of the Initial Series Vase from Uaxactun to be evidence that the painter did not work from a manuscript or drawing, He believed there to be "several errors in details of glyphs which show the artisans Ignorance of his subject and which could hardly have appeared had this been a careful copy of a priest-astronomer's drawing' (1962: 17).

In general, Thompson paid very little attention to Maya pots. Having decided that their glyphs were of no value, he had little concern for the painting, carving, or imagery and he was known to condemn various vessels as forgeries. One vessel, however, struck a resonant chord: the Gann Vase, which seemed to him to illustrate a Kekchi myth he had recorded about the moon's betrayal of the sun (1939). He repeated his thesis about this pot throughout his life (cf. Thompson 1970).

Starting in the 1940s. art historians began to pay attention to Maya vases. In 1943, PäI Kelemen wrote that "one of the greatest artistic achievements of the Maya was their painted pottery," and he was particularly interested in the ability of pots to tell a story (1943: 177). He lamented the undeciphered glyphs on Maya ceramics. He considered overall composition, noting that the Initial Series Vase displays splendor, dignity, and movement' and the Chamá Vase "radiates tension and displays more action than is usually depicted..." (Kelemen 1943:180). In 1944 Salvador Toscano wrote in a similar vein and drew attention to what he called the "realismo pictórico maya" (Toscano 1970: 159). José Pijoan drew largely historical conclusions about Maya pottery (e.g. that Old Empire" refugees must have taken many fine Maya pots to the highlands) (1946: 438). Like Toscano, Paul Westheim, too, was drawn to the more simple life shown on Maya ceramics ('estan ausentes los dioses"), in distinction to the stone monuments, which were thought at the time to show priests or gods (1950:239). George Kubler first suggested in 1962 that Maya pots reflected a lost "coeval school of manuscript Illumination" Kubler 1962: 17 1), a notion that was revived later by Michael Coe and others (Coe 1973; Robicsek and Hales 1983, 1988). He believed that "Maya painters of this period also transferred the pagination of book-like compositions to pottery surfaces" and noted that the form of the cylindrical vase reinforces the "re-entrant composition" Kubler 1962: 17 1). Terence Grieder submitted a dissertation on the formal qualities of Maya vase painting in 1962, and in a published article, he discussed the representations of space and form on the pots

(1964). He attempted to study forms without analysis of their meaning a difficult task under any circumstances.

This flurry of writing by art historians treated an essentially unchanged corpus. The body of Maya pots published by Gordon and Mason, Merwin and Vaillant, and Smith had been fixed by World War II. It was essentially this pre-war corpus with additions from Tikal and Altar de Sacriftcios that Marta Foncerrada and Sonia Lombardo de Ruiz treated in their 1979 Catalogue. (Note 3) Postwar excavators turned first to less elite settlements and were preoccupied with settlement pattern and daily life. Archaeologists, from 1940 to1960, essentially ceased to discover fine Maya pottery because they were no longer finding the tombs of the nobility nor even the tombs of other wealthy persons. In fact, despite the discovery of one of the greatest Maya tombs, that of King Pacal, in the Temple of inscriptions at Palenque, many archaeologists, particularly in Mexico, began to say that Maya lords were not buried In pyramids at all. Archaeology of the great cities languished. When a single, significant pot was published by Frans Blom--who suggested that its imagery could be interpreted in light of the tale of the Hero Twins in the Popol Vuh (1950), it was completely ignored.

In turn, the “new” archaeology necessitated greater use of pottery for mechanical purposes. “Recently, with a shift in Interest to smaller, presumably domestic or rural sites that are devoid of monuments or great architectural endeavors, ceramics have assumed a more important role as Indicators of time” (Smith and Gifford 1965: 498). Ceramicists became specialized practitioners of archaeology, and usually one such specialist was included on every major excavation. “A detailed knowledge of ceramic developments is necessary for a proper evaluation of such phenomena [i.e. connections with Central Mexico, diffusion, migration] and their place in the broader outlines of Mesoamerican prehistory” (Rands and Smith 1965: 95). As an outgrowth of such specialized ceramic studies, James and Carol Gifford founded the Journal Cerámica de Cultura Maya et. al. In 1961 at Temple University as a clearinghouse for the nomenclature used for Maya pottery. Interestingly enough, for the first eleven years of publication, Céramica usually featured an unprovenanced work of Maya art on the cover, despite the fact that said work was never discussed in the issue-, in 1972, policy apparently shifted, and all subsequent covers featured archaeologically excavated vessels.

The epigraphic revolution set in motion by Yuri Knorosov (English publication 1968). Heinrich Berlin (1958) and Tatiana Proskouriakoff (1960, 1963, 1964) initially had little effect on the study of Maya vases. Unlike the stone monuments, the vases did not seem to relate dynastic sequences of the sort Proskouriakoff had documented for Yaxchilán or Piedras Negras; the known corpus of 1960 did not include pots with the prominent emblem glyphs Berlin had isolated. The vases, then, continued to be thought of as the work of illiterate artists. After the discovery of the now-famous Altar de Sacrificios pot, R.E.W. Adams believed It to bear illustrations of gods and their celebrants parallel to those Thompson had described in the Bonampak murals (Ruppert, Thompson, and Proskouriakoff 1955), with ceremo-

nies in “honor of the Tepeyollotl like god” (1963:92). But by 1971, when Adams published the complete inventory of Altar ceramics, he had identified the texts and figures as those of historical persons who attended funerary rituals (Adams 197 1). This appeared to be the first major breakthrough In interpreting the inscriptions on Maya pottery.

Beginning with the 1960s, museums and collections particularly in the United States, but also throughout the world, acquired great numbers of Maya vases that had not been previously known. The Museum of Primitive Art (now incorporated into the Metropolitan Museum of Art) acquired Its famous pot in 1969; Dumbarton Oaks built its collection of fine pots in the 1960s and 1970s. Almost all Maya pots of this era traveled the trail of the art market: they were generally looted from their contexts and by the time they reached the United States, it was frequently difficult to determine their places of origin. (Note 4) By the end of the decade, few of these pots had been published and only one had received scholarly treatment, the Museum of Primitive Art Vase, now known as the Metropolitan Vase (Foncerrada 1970). Two exhibitions of the early 1970s ignored the ‘new` objects: neither the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s blockbuster *Before Cortéz Sculpture of Middle America* Wasby and Scott 1970) nor the Center for InterAmerican Relations’ small exhibit, *The Art of Maya Hieroglyphic Writing* (Graham 1971) considered a single example of the new corpus.

In 1970, Michael D. Coe began work to help organize an exhibition on ancient Maya writing at the Grolier Club. “While mounting the exhibit, and especially while studying the texts that occasioned it, it became quite clear that the focal point of the catalogue should be the large number of painted and carved funerary vases which were brought ... together for the first time” (Coe 1973: 5). Once the Grolier exhibition, *The Maya Scribe and His World* (April 20 to June 5, 197 1) closed, following the established tradition of vase studies, Coe had each Maya pot “rolled out” by an artist after photographs by Justin Kerr. He noted that the “subject matter of this pottery, and the hieroglyphic texts painted or inscribed upon it, have been generally ignored by archaeologists and art historians” (1973: 11). He considered the new corpus of Maya pots in light of the previously known material, and he drew some astonishing conclusions. Coe suggested that much of the imagery on Maya vases derived from a long-lost corpus of Classic mythology, of which the tales of the Hero Twins in the Popol Vuh were but a small fragment, (Note 5) and that this imagery was particularly given to funerary ceramics because of their very nature: they formed a “book of the dead,” carried to the Underworld by the deceased noble. Narratives and scenes thus previously thought to illustrate daily life (the Chamá Vase, for example) could be re-interpreted as scenes relating to the gods and the Underworld. Coe hypothesized that two gods in particular, God N and God L, were the ruling lords of the Underworld, because of their frequency, he also noted the striking absence of a number of gods, among them, Chac, the Maize God. God D, and God K (Coe 1973: 14-15).

But perhaps most strikingly, Coe took a new arid comprehensive look at the inscriptions on Maya pots, particularly the rim texts, among them the two similar ones previously identified

by Longyear (see above). In direct contradiction of Thompson. Coe argued that the texts were indeed meaningful, and that the pattern Longyear recognized was widespread, with both geographical breadth and chronological depth. Coe called this highly patterned text the "Primary Standard Sequence" (Coe 1973: 18) and suggested that it was the "glyphic form of a long hymn which could have been sung over the dead or dying person, describing the descent of the Hero Twins to the Underworld..." (Coe 1973: 22). Coe identified a hitherto unrecognized school of Maya vase painting as the "Codex style" (Note 6) (Coe 1973: Plates 42-46) and proposed that masters of manuscript art painted these pots, transferring images in black or brown line from codex pages to the cream-colored surfaces of Maya cylinders.

All in all, *The Maya Scribe and His World* revolutionized the study of Maya pots, and arguments soon surfaced among archaeologists and art historians: Should a corpus of looted pots be studied? Did legally excavated pots really have the same Primary Standard Sequence (Coggtns 1975: 525)? Were not some of the scenes on Maya pottery illustrations of mundane life (Gifford 1974; Kubler 1977; Paul 1976; Reents and Bishop 1985)? Up until publication of *The* Maya Scribe, Maya pots had been thought to conform to the pre1960 paradigm of Classic Maya history: the Maya were a pure, noble race who dwelt in a time of theocratic peace, ruled over by priestly timekeepers and skywatchers, who guided the illiterate through agricultural rituals on their occasional visits to vacant ceremonial centers. Epigraphic work by Knorosov, Berlin, and Proskouriakoff had already established that the Maya lords were dynastic warlords who chronicled the stuff of their own lives on their monuments: birth, accession, marriage, warfare, and death. But study of the pots, If thought about at all, had lagged far behind.

With the recognition of both the greatly expanded corpus and the new light in which they could be examined, a world of interpretations was opened through the study of Maya vases. A good many more notions about the Classic Maya were overturned' through recognition of the rituals depicted on Maya pottery. Although identified as a bloodletting pot by Thompson (1961), the Huehuetenango Vase (Kerr #496) was used by David Joralemon as the point of departure for an identification of the widespread practice of penis perforation (1974). Based on images from Maya ceramics, Peter Furst and Michael Coe brought the Maya practice of ritual enemas to attention in 1977 (Furst and Coe 1977). Nicholas Hellmuth has focussed on the representations of gods (Hellmuth 1987), and the ones first thought by Coe to be absent from the pots have been identified (e.g., God K in Robicsek 1978; the Maize God in Taube 1985; Chac by Stuart, as cited in Schele and Miller 1986, and God D in Hellmuth, n.d.). Hellmuth described other grisly rituals (Hellmuth, n.d.). Coe went on to identify the gods and patrons of writing, the Monkey Scribes, half-brothers to the Hero Twins (Coe 1977). Coe also published other corpuses of Maya vases that had previously not been known: in 1975, he examined the Dumbarton Oaks collection and in 1978, he wrote the catalogue to an exhibition at the Princeton University Art Museum (Coe 1975 1978; see also Coe 1982), *Lords of the Underworld.*
The exhibition, Lords of the Under-

world: Masterpieces of Maya Ceramics, also Introduced a new technology to the study of Maya vases: the rollout camera. The Dumbarton Oaks corpus had been rolled out in life-size color drawings, but in the year of its publication, 1975, Justin Kerr began to use his rollout camera, a machine he first hypothesized constructing in 1971. In 1974 he made his first successful rollout photographs with the camera he designed and built, some of which were published in "Lords." Although the diagram (Figure 2) suggests a simple machine, the principle has only used been by others twice, once by the National Geographic Society, (see, for example, Stuart 1975; Stuart and Stuart 1977, endpapers) and once in Europe, for Lin Crocker (Berjonneau et al 1985). (Note 7) Kerr rollouts have been made for many subsequent volumes (Coe 1982; Robicsek and Hales 1981, 1982; Schele and Miller 1986; Parsons et al 1988) and widely reproduced in others. In general, the rollout camera has made the draftsman rollout obsolete, but Hellmuth, for example, has continued to commission drawings of Maya pots (Hellmuth 1976; Clarkson 1978). and some archaeologists continue to have drawings made of the vessels they excavate.

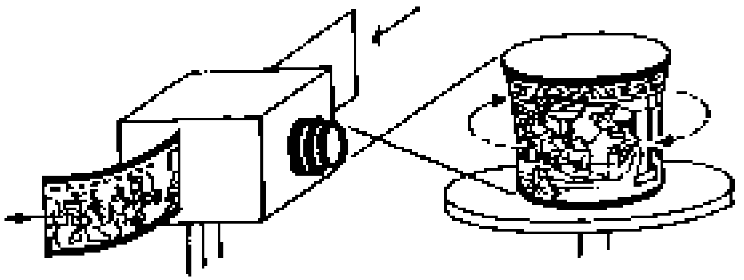

Figure 2

In the 1960s, archaeologists returned to the excavation of major ceremonial architecture at Tikal and Altar de Sacrificios, and a new archaeological corpus of Maya vases began to be assembled (W. Coe 1967; Coggins 1975; Adams 1971,1977). Clemency Coggins successfully constructed a narrative of the Classic kings at Tikal that was based on art, archaeology, epigraphy, and whole tomb lots, including many pots. In the 1960s and 1970s, David Pendergast and Norman Hammond, among others, recovered Maya pots from Altun Ha, Nohmul, and other sites (Pendergast 1979, 1982; Hammond 1985). Susannah Ekholm recovered an enormous garbage dump or ceremonial cache filled with broken pots and figurines at Lagartero, Chiapas, in the late 1970s (Ekholm. 1979). In the 1980s, the Guatemalan government directed extensive excavations at both Tikal and Uaxactun (see, for example, the Mundo Perdido material in Clancy et. al. 1985). R.E.W. Adams has also directed excavations at Rio Azul (Adams 1986). Diane and Arlen Chase have recovered fine pots in the Peten, at Santa Rita, and now, at Caracol (A. Chase 1985; Chase and Chase 1987). Under the successive direction of Gordon R Willey, Claude Baudez, William T. Sanders, and now William L Fash, Copán has been the site of renewed archaeological investigation. Finely painted Maya vases have been recovered and studied from a these and yet other sites (Rice and Sharer 1987). Independent ceramic sequences, based in large part on the Holmul and Uaxactun findings, have been devised for these two sites, and some new terminology offered, although in general, most depend on the chronologies and typologies established by Vaillant and R.E. Smith.

Along with many of the pots with archaeological context, a single archaeologically excavated pot (Figure 3) has been singled out as one of the greatest masterpieces of Maya vase painting. It is the "Altar" Vase (Adams

1977; Schele 1988), which was found in a minor burial associated with a major tomb at Altar de Sacrificios. Perhaps no other single Maya vase has been the subject of such disputed interpretations. Adams first read the texts on the Altar Vase in 1971 as identifying the person in the tomb and the attendants at funerary rites. Following a placement of the calendar round date on the pot, he determined that one of the protagonists might be Bird Jaguar the Great of Yaxchilán, whose glyph he believed he had identified, and whose emblem glyph surely does appear on the pot. As art historians and some anthropologists began to rethink the implications of the scenes and texts on painted pots in general, including the unprovenienced corpus, many archaeologists dogmatically supported the Adams interpretation of the Altar Vase (Hammond 1982; Morley and Sharer 1983), even going so far as to redraw and reposition the glyphs to make the argument more believable (cover of Henderson 1981). For many archaeologists, a line against looted pots had to be drawn, and by following the Adams interpretation, they positioned themselves on the side of the line with those who did not use such pots, regardless of the correctness or incorrectness, of the reading of the glyphs.

Figure 3

The great boom in the number of Maya vases excavated both legally and illegally has led to a need on the part of all scholars for systematic documentation of the corpus. In 1970, Nicholas Hellmuth began to photograph all Maya vases in Guatemala, many of which subsequently appeared on the art market. He sold copies or partial copies of his archives to the University of Texas at San Antonio (cf. Quirarte 1979). Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C., and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, among others. He has continued to build his archive and has slowly begun to publish it (1987, 1988).
Justin and Barbara Kerr have kept a record of every Maya vase they have rolled out, and in this volume they have now begun to publish the corpus in the order in which this photographic record has been made. (The series now consists of five volumes. The corpus contains more than 1300 rollouts and is being digitized.) (ed. note)

One of the problems of an expanded corpus, particularly one without archaeological provenience, is the identification of fakes. Maya pots have been forged for many years. Even a vessel in the Gordon and Mason corpus appears to be fake (Plate LVII), and many others have been published over the years Dwyer and Dwyer 1975, Plates 25 and 26; Von Winning 1978; Clancy et. al. 1985, Plates 77). Increasingly skilled forgers have become adept at copying real Maya pots, but it Is usually just such copying that gives away their art. Forgers are less likely to draw accurate glyphic texts. Perhaps an even greater problem is over-restoration (Taylor 1982), in which a perfectly authentic pot is heavily repainted. Maya hieroglyphs are the least likely part of the painting to be retouched, but even archaeologically excavated pots are not immune to repaint (e.g. Clancy et. al. 1985: Plate 95). The Kerr corpus frequently includes rollout photographs of Maya vases in various states of res-

toration, but to avoid great repetition, only one version of a given Maya pot will be published.

In 1978, with support from Brookhaven National Laboratory and the Smithsonian Institution, Ronald Bishop. Dorie Reents, and others began to study the ceramic wares of both provenienced and unprovenienced pots, in the hopes of discovering through analysis of trace elements, their origins (Bishop et. al. 1982; Bishop et. al. 1985). Although It may be many years before large-scale results are known, the study promises greater knowledge of unprovenienced wares and, with the provenienced pots, an understanding of Maya trading patterns.

Meanwhile, the corpus has continued to expand (Tate 1985; Couch 1988; Berjonneau et. al. 1985; Schele and Miller 1986; Clancy et al. 1985; Parsons et. al. 1988). Battle lines continue to be drawn about the legitimacy of studying one pot and not another (e.g.. Klein 1988; Schele and Miller 1988). Princeton University Press has just issued a volume that focuses on the study of Maya vases and their iconography, and yet more chilling revelations about the Maya will probably be forthcoming (Benson and Griffin 1988). Private collections age and become part of the public domain (e.g. Coe 1982; Couch 1988). Ongoing archaeological projects continue to yield new works. Through careful examination of the corpus, scholars are now beginning to recognize individual hands within schools of painting (Kerr and Kerr 1988; Schele and Miller 1986). The Kerrs have identified three painters, the Princeton Painter, the Metropolitan Painter, and the Fantastic Painter, who all work in "codex" style, and they first recognized the Master of the Pink Glyphs, although they now believe that the Pink Glyph pots may be the work of several painters in the same workshop. In 1975, Clemency Coggins noted that the pots of Tikal Burial 116 had all been made by the same individual, but that each vessel had then been painted by a different person (Coggins 1975). Much other work can now be done on the styles and hands of Maya painted ceramics, particularly as the published corpus grows.

Some of the most promising research now underway on Maya pots regards their hieroglyphic texts. In the 19th century, Stephens, Dieseldorff, Förstemann, and others recognized that an understanding of Maya vases and their imagery would come in tandem with the decipherment of their glyphic texts. In 1979, Peter Mathews identified the phrase 'u tup," or, his earspool (Mathews 1979) on an Altun Ha flare. With this "name-tagging as a model. Stephen Houston., and Karl Taube have recently shown that many Maya plate texts, at the end of the Primary Standard Sequence, read "u lak," or, his plate, followed by the name and titles of the ruler (Houston and Taube 1987). David Stuart has now gone on to identify the glyph for cylinder vase, and he has shown convincingly that many pot rim texts, including part of the Primary Standard Sequence, read something to the effect of "Here It Is written, on this vase, used for cacao; his writing, So and So, the Scribe, his title, of this place "(Stuart 1988). What is particularly exciting about this decipherment is that it reveals the use and patronage of the vessel. Stuart has also read the glyphs identifying both painter and carver of painted and carved Maya vases (1987). For the first time, we now know the names of Maya scribes and artists. It is perhaps in these re-

cent glyphic studies that the greatest breakthroughs in the studies of Maya vases are being made, and it is perhaps through such glyphic studies that art historians and archaeologists may find some common ground.

George Kubler suggested additional avenues of inquiry. Michael Coe. George Stuart, Ed Kamens, and Justin and Barbara Kerr all read early drafts of this essay and gave me thoughtful advice.

NOTES

1. "In Germany we possess the most valuable Maya manuscript (The Dresden Code), and our scholars have taken the most active part in deciphering it; but on the other hand, almost nothing has been done on the part of Germany towards collecting fresh material and promoting researches which give such rich returns when conducted on the spot" (1904 a: 640). He was dismayed that the famous Chamá vase, now in the University Museum of Philadelphia had been sold after its discovery to an American, "where it probably figures as one of the chief ornaments of some drawing-room" (1904 a: 639). At the time of the publication of the Gordon and Mason folio, the Chamá vase was in the Cary Collection in Philadelphia" Maudslay later noted that a Yaxchilán lintel which had been "repacked in Coban for transmission to England" had, by some mistake, been "put into the wrong case and sent to the Museum at Berlin" (Maudslay 1889-1902, 5.Z 47). Could Dieseldorff, a resident of Coban, have sent the lintel astray in order to build the collection in Berlin for which he so much hoped? Subsequently known as Lintel 56, the monument was destroyed in a World War II bombing raid. (Go Back)

2. Diana Fane of the Brooklyn Museum has done extensive research on the methods and goals of Siewart Culin, who acquired a great American Indian collection for that museum. His goal was collection of objects, even to seize the last remaining sacred objects of an indigenous people, such as the Zuni but his stated plan was couched as ethnography. (Go Back)

3. They described their corpus as the pots with archaeological provenience, but for some unstated reasort, they omitted the Seibal pots. (Go Back)

4. A given provenance may at times have been attached to a piece to make it more valuable; in other situations, a dealer may have cautiously refrained from offering such information. (Go Back)

5. As noted above, Frans Blom had already linked a single Maya vessel to a tale from the Popol Vuh. (Go Back)

6. The Metropolitan Vase (Coe 1973. plate 44) (K521) had already been published in Thornpson 1970, Plate 14, and by Marta Foncerrada (1970), who recognized its magnificent quality and unusual style. (Go Back)

7. Others may have been devised for photographing Greek vases. The British Museum for example, was able to rollout the Fenton Vase (Kerr #2894), perhaps with a camera invented for other works. (Go Back)

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A BRIEF NOTE ON THE NAME OF THE VISION SERPENT

LINDA SCHELE

On a long hot August day in 1973, Gillett Griffin, David Joralemon, and I spent a wonderful, intense day walking through the ruins and talking about the soon-to explode world of Maya religion and history. During that exchange, David told me about one of the publications which would stimulate that explosion of understanding--he warned me to order Michael Coe's new book as soon as it was announced. Thanks to that warning, I ordered one of the first thousand printed of *The Maya Scribe and His World* and was there to participate in the exponential advances that came from his truly amazing insights into the imagery and texts on Maya pottery. The impact of that book, along with the new avenues of research opened the *Primera Mesa Redonda of Palenque*, which took place in December of the same year, have truly changed the way we see and understand the ancient Maya and the world created in their fertile minds. Michael Coe's identification of the Primary Standard Sequence and his convincing arguments that scenes on pottery depicted myths that eventually became the Quiche Maya Popol Vuh, elevated the painting and texts on pottery to the status of primary source from the neglected oblivion into which they had fallen.

The essays in this book review the history of scholarship on pottery and inscriptions, present new readings on the PSS, and the findings on mythology, meaning, and imagery that have been gleaned from pottery in the year's since Coe's pioneering work. During those years, my primary contribution (Schele 1983 and 1988) has been to identify the Jaguar-covered "ahau" that appears in so many name phrases as a title identifying the creature depicted as an Underworld denizen. Since these creatures appear on more than one pot, the same technique that Schellhas (1904) used to identify the names of the gods in the codices can be applied to find the names of the animals, people, spirits, gods, and "bumps in the night" that inhabit the Maya Underworld. In 1985, 1 prepared comparative charts in anticipation of a chapter in a book I was working on with George and David Stuart. Others have since employed the same techniques to find a profusion of new names of these creatures, and the work continues. This area of study is one of great potential for Immediate and future research.

In this brief essay, I want to deal with only one of the many name phrases that have been discovered, both to point out thename of one of these creatures and how that name relates to other areas of study. One of the Vision Serpents that appears repeatedly in pottery scenes Is distinguished by a deer antler and deer ear attached to its head (Figure 1). That it is a Vision Serpent is amply demonstrated by the number of examples that belch gods of various sorts from its gapping

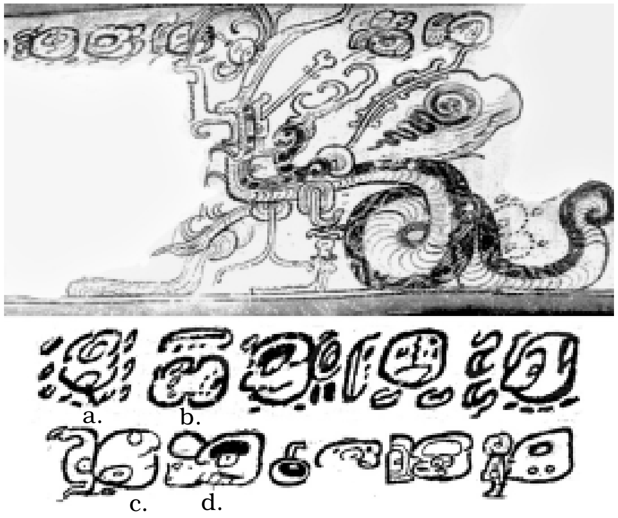
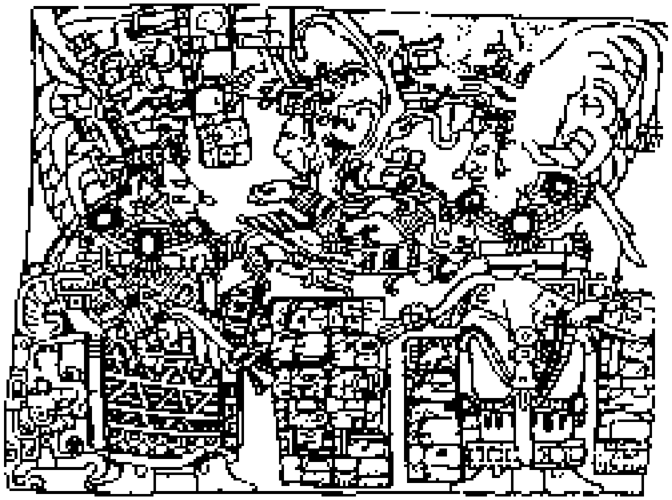
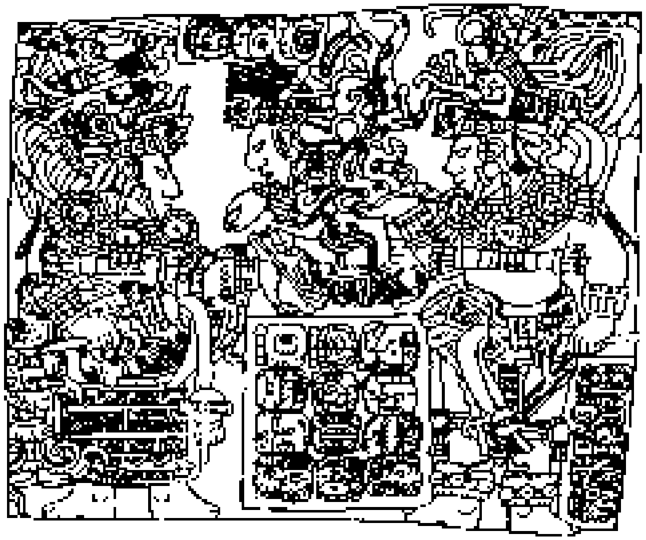


Figure 2. Detail file no. K531, K2572, K556

mouth. In at least three of its occurrences, this beastie is named *chihchan* in an adjacent phrase (Figure 2; a,b and c,d). In the fourth (Figure 3), it is also called chih chan (written with “sky’ rather than “snake”), but the creature shown is a deer wearing a snake around its neck. Me creature is a “deer serpent’ whose name survives as the great Homed Serpent of Chorti myth, and as the fifth day of the Yucatec 260-day calendar. Thompson (1950:75) made this connection between

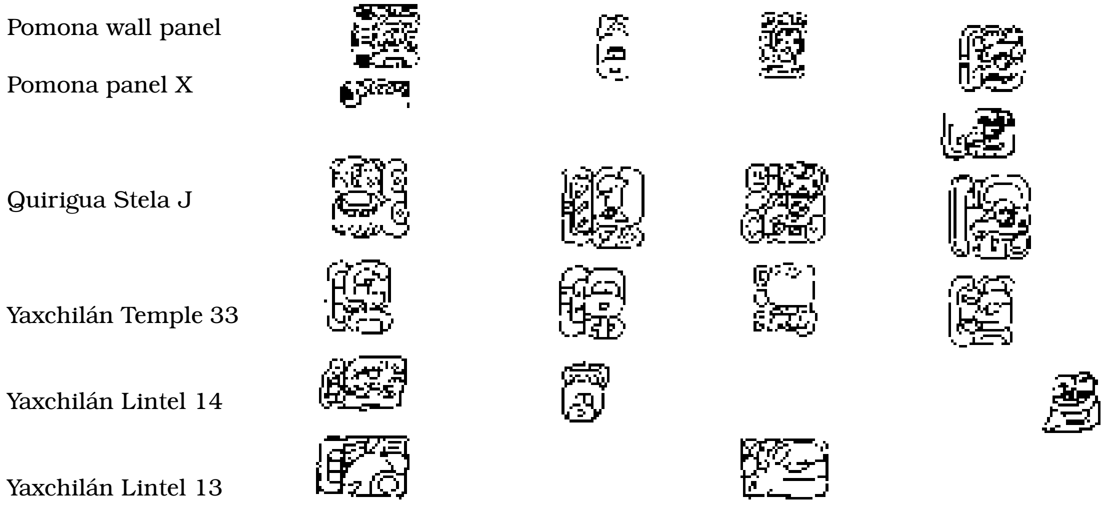


Yaxchilán Lintel 13



Yaxchilán Lintel 14

Figure 3. Detail from file no. K927



Verbal phrases associated with the “na-chan” blood-letting events
(Pomona and Yaxchilán drawings courtesy of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University)

the modern Chorti myth and the ancient day name, but at the time the "deer-serpent" combined-creature on the pots had not yet been identified.

Perhaps the most interesting new piece of Information is the name for the fifth day in the Chol calendar. In a list of day names(1988:375) lists *nachan* as the fifth day.

This word corresponds to a word that appears in the names of other Vision Serpents. David Stuart (personal communication, 1988) has identified the name of the Vision Serpent on Yaxchilán lintel 14 as *Chaanal Chac Bay Chan* (Figure 4), and he has recognized the same name repeated on Copán Stelae 10 and 13.

His insight has led me to conclude that the Yaxol *Hun Uinic Nachan* that I have previously identified with vision rites (Schele 1982:67). Is in fact the name for another of these Vision Serpents. In this context, the word for serpent Is usually prefixed by *na*, exactly as in the Chol name for the fifth day. Thus, the Yucatec name for that day used a borrowed name from one Vision Serpent to substitute for another one, which was probably the standard name in the Cholan languages.

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HIEROGLYPHS ON MAYA VESSELS

DAVID STUART

Our present understanding of the elite and religious culture of Classic Maya civilization owes much to the vivid scenes and hieroglyphic texts displayed on ceramic and stone vessels. The seemingly countless images of courtly gatherings, conversing gods, battles and ball games, offer a glimpse of Maya life that is seldom apparent on the carved public monuments. Hieroglyphic texts on vessels likewise hold a special fascination, for they sometimes describe and name the actors and events portrayed in the painted or carved scenes. Moreover, glyphs on pottery are of great use when considering larger questions about the nature of the Maya script The comparative study of the repetitive texts on vessels, for example, opens a door on new decipherments that have great bearing on all aspects of Maya epigraphy, and consequently, many larger issues of Maya civilization. It is no exaggeration to state that glyphs on vessels comprise the largest and most important body of Classic texts apart from the stone monuments.

This essay is an introduction of sorts to the study of glyphs on Maya vessels. I hope to illustrate some of the basic texts we find on Maya vases, bowls, and dishes, and to analyze some of their structures. But in no way can this claim to be a comprehensive treatment of the subject. The evidence now at hand is simply too new and vast to allow any such treatise in the space here provided. A commentary on the religious components of vessel texts would alone require a more extensive study. Therefore I will concentrate here on the highly repetitious text that appears on so many vessels, known collectively as the Primary Standard Sequence.

THE PRIMARY STANDARD SEQUENCE

Michael Coe pioneered the study of hieroglyphs on pottery with the publication of *The Maya Scribe and his World* in 1973. In compiling numerous painted scenes and hieroglyphs from vessels, Coe noticed the highly repetitious nature of the inscriptions that ran, usually, around the outside rim of vases and bowls. He called the repeating text the "Primary Standard Sequence" of glyphs. Each example contained a fixed sequence of signs and sign combinations, some more abbreviated than others. When Coe presented his study, no hieroglyph in the sequence was readable. He surmised, nevertheless, that these texts probably were of a religious or mythic theme, given the predominance of painted scenes of supernaturals; in their company. Coe specifically suggested that the sequence may be a mortuary chant or ritual formula, analogous to the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

The decipherment of the Primary Standard Sequence (hereafter PSS) has advanced since Coe's initial findings and suppositions. Specifically, the availability of more pottery texts has allowed for a more refined understanding of their internal structures and forms. The following paragraphs present a brief summary of these revealing structural patterns.

First we must understand that historical names are present in almost all examples of the Standard Sequence. Each example has its main "subject," who is named at or near the end of the passage. On occasion we can recognize these as rulers of certain city-states: a short text on an onyx bowl in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection, for example, names an Early Classic ruler also mentioned in the king-list of Palenque. Another bowl (Kerr no. 1698) names a known ruler of Ucanal. named "Shield Jaguar" (the same name as the celebrated Yaxchilán ruler, but certainly a different individual). But why are these rulers and other high- ranking personages named on these vessels? To answer this, let us look at the structure of the PSS as it appears before these names.

In a system that may be too simplistic to reflect nuances of the pattern, I have divided the PSS into three forms that progress from simple to elaborate:
1. Possessed noun / Personal Name
2. Possessed noun/Prepositional Phrase / Personal Name
3. Introducing glyphs / Possessed noun / Prepositional phrase / Personal Name

Here follows summary descriptions of each of these structures, with some commentary and illustrated examples.

The first pattern (Figure 1) consists of two parts: usually the so-called "Wing-Quincunx" (a descriptive term of Coes), and a personal name. The Wing-Quincunx, and those glyphs that are structurally similar (to be discussed momentarily) are basic components of all examples of the PSS. The Wing-Quincunx takes a number of

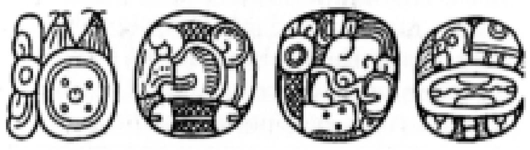

Figure 1. *The basic structure of most standard ized texts on vessels consists of a possessed noun and a personal name. Here the first glyph known as the "Wing-Quincunx," probably represents the word y-uch'ibil, "the drinking cup..." The name, written in the final three cartouches, is aknown Early Classic ruler of Palenque*

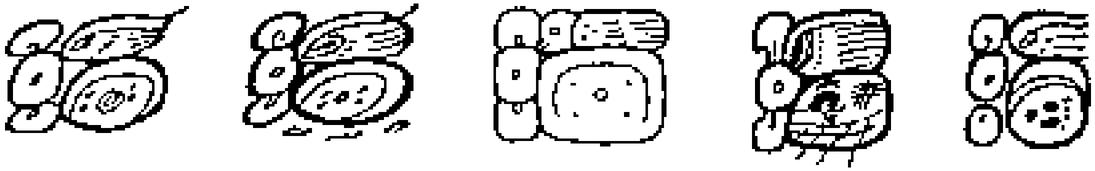

Figure 2. *Various forms of the Wing-Quincunx.*

visual forms (Figure 2). Three signs compose its most common form, and all are probably CV syllables. The first sign Is always yu (T61/62). The middle sign represents a wing (176/77), a pair of wings, or, very rarely, a full-figure of a bird (T236), but its phonetic value Is not securely established. The third element is one of the various forms of *bi* usually a quincunx-but sometimes also represented by a simian head or a footprint. On a very few examples a final *la* follows the *bi.*

When the yu sign is in an initial position, as here, it may represent the pre-vocalic pronoun y- and the initial u- of some possessed nominal or verbal root. The structure of the PSS points to such a possessive function, since the Wing Quincunx as the first glyph, precedes a personal name. The final *bi* sign might indicate that the possessed root ends in -b. giving us something like "his uCVb."

Stephen Houston and Barbara Macleod have independently arrived at a more complete phonetic decipherment of the Wing-Quincunx. They note that the verb for "to drink" is uch' (in Cholan languages) or ule (in Yucatecan languages). The noun for "drinking cup" often adds an instrumental suffix (-Vb) to this root, together with the noun suffix (-Vl). Thus in modern Chol (Aulie and Aulie 1978:125) we find uch'ibl -taza." Chorti. has the slightly different form ucp*ir (Wisdom, n.d.) (the p is phonologically equivalent to b of other western Mayan languages, as is Chorti r to l. In Colonial Tzotzil the term is *uch'obil* (Laughlin 1988:1.159), and Yucatec has the gloss uk'bil. Since the phonetic clues of the Wing-Quincunx show that the possessed root is likely uCVb, Houston and Macleod posit that the middle sign, the wing, to be a ch'V or k'V syllable. Uses of the wing sign in other glyphs suggest that ch'i is the most likely reading. yielding the full form yu-ch'ib or y-uch'-ibi). The most basic component of the PSS on vases therefore seems to read "the drinking cup of..." As would be expected, the Wing-Quincunx occurs on bowls and cylindrical vases, but never on inscribed plates or dishes. In its place, as Houston and Taube (1987) demonstrate. is the combination u-la-ka, for u *lak*, "the clay plate of..." It stands to reason, therefore, that the personal name found in all PSSs, refers to the cup's owner.

Decipherments such as these seem a far cry from the staid historical formulae of the public inscriptions. But we must understand that Maya hieroglyphic texts do not merely relate name-and-date outlines of ancient history. We know that texts may directly mention the artifacts, monuments *or* buildings upon which they are inscribed. Glyphs on a shell or jade plaque, for instance, will very often provide information on the owner of an object and the type of object in hand. Mathews (1979) was the first to identify such nametags with his recognition of the glyph u-tu-pa as u tup, "the jewel of...," on a jade earspool from Altun Ha, Belize. Longer texts on monuments or buildings also make some reference to their own physical settings, giving dates for erection and dedication rites, and labeling information along the lines of Y-otot, "the house of..." are very common. Sometimes included in such passages are the actual proper names for artifacts and monuments. It is of little surprise, then, to find that glyphs on pottery work in much the same way.

As we have seen, different glyphs designate different vessel types (Figure 3). The Wing-Quincunx is confined mostly to cylindrical vases, round bowls, or generally any pot that would hold a reasonable amount of drink. On flat round plates we sometimes find u *lak,* "the plate of..," in a structurally identical position. Houston has shown me another glyph, u-ha-wa-te that may designate plates with legs. Other glyphs representing possessed nouns may remain undeciphered, but it stands to reason that these too would refer to types of vessels or their contents.

Now that the most basic form and meaning of the PSS is clearer, let us turn to elaborations on the simple pattern: Often between y-uch'-ib-il (or a similar possessed noun) and the possessor's name are several glyphs not yet discussed. The intervening sequence may take various forms, but in nearly all cases the first of the new glyphs is introduced by the preposition ti or ta (Figure 4). This may indicate that the new elements of the PSS form a prepositional phrase that modifies the possessed vessel reference.

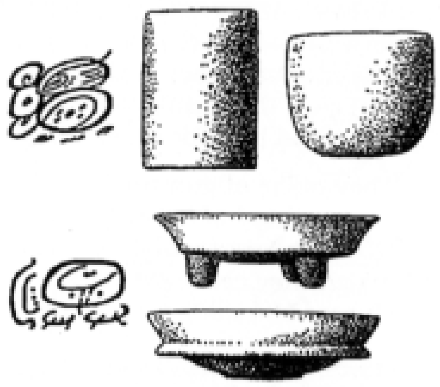

Figure 3. *Two common hieroglyphic terms for different vessel shapes. The Wing-Quincunx glyph refers to drinking vases (uch'ib?); the second glyph ("the* lak *of...") is found on shallow p;ates probably used for food.*

The phrases mostly fail into several types, but again this may be too simple a division. The phonetic elements ta-tsi / te-le / ka-ka-wa are quite common after the Wing-Quincunx. Also in this position one may find the sequence ta-yu-ta-la / kaka-wa. On occasion the two seemingly combine in some manner, as in ta-yutal / i-tsi / te-le / ka-ka-wa. Another phrase, much rarer than the others, is the single glyph introduced by the same preposition, ta-u-1u. We should take note that the first two forms share ka-ka-wa, which presumably corresponds to Mayan kakaw, that is, "cacao" (often abbreviated as ka-wa) (Stuart 1988b). Moreover, the combination of the simpler third form of the phrase, u-lu, can perhaps be read ul "atole, corn gruel." Both cacao and atole were important and well-known drinks in ancient Mesoamerica. I suggest that these prepositional phrases are elaborations on the sequence which tell us something of the function of the vessels, namely their use as containers for specific types of beverages

But the signs that precede the ka-ka-wa glyph have yet to be explained. No readings are obvious, but the combination tsi-te-le or i-tsi-te-le recalls the Yucatec entries for the botanical term *itsinte* or *itsinte*: "a plant with which the Indian women season posole, camote stew, and other things" (Pio Perez 1866-77:156).

Figure 4. *Prepositional Phrases are sometimes inserted between the possessed noun and the personal name, as shown here in a vessel text from Burial 196 at Tikal. After the Wing-Quincunx, a sequence of four glyphs may refer to the intended contents of the vessel (note* ka-ka-wa *at posion E). The long chain of glyphs contain the name and titles of "RulerB" of Tikal.*

The gylphs might therefore tell us of a certain recipe for cacao beverages which make use of seasoning from the *itsimte* plant. Concerning the signs yu-ta-la before ka-ka-wa, I have no suggested decipherment.

Given this expansion on the PSS, then, it seems reasonable to suppose that pottery vessels were used as containers for beverages. Landa and other early chroniclers make it clear that drinks were important in Maya ritual life. For example:

> They make of ground maize and cacao a kind of foaming drink which is very savory, and with which they celebrate their feasts. (Tozzer 1941:90)

The famed Princeton Vase shows a liquid (presumably some cacao or maize drink) being poured from a cylindrical vessel. It stands to reason that elaborately decorated Maya vessels were not always made for funerary purposes, but were rather the well-used beverage utensils of the deceased, used In both ritual and daily life.

The third and most elaborate form of the PSS reveals the addition of yet more components that we may call, in the absence of a better term, "introducing glyphs" (Figure 5). These precede the Wing-Quincunx and its structural relatives. Unfortunately much of this section eludes decipherment, but there is strong evidence that it refers, at least in part. to the manner of decoration of the vessel.

The passage that precedes the possessed noun may take several forms. A frequent component I call the "Initial glyph," seen as the first glyph in all three examples In Figure 5. This glyph is often used to locate the starting point of a text running in a seemingly continuous band around a vessel's rim. The same glyph appears in the monumental inscriptions in a much different environment There It customarily precedes hieroglyphic dates or verbs, perhaps as a marker of emphasis within a larger narrative structure of a text. I cannot posit a tentative reading for the initial glyph in any such context, but we should keep its many uses in mind for future considerations.

A glyph whose main sign represents the head of God N usually follows the initial glyph. Usually T88 is its suffix. This glyph is often replaced by a stepped sign with associated affixes that must somehow be equivalent Other glyphs appear in this position and thus seem closely related in general function. I must stress the point that the head glyph of God N must not necessarily be some proper name or designation. On the contrary, structural analysis of this God N head glyph in pottery and stone Inscriptions leads me to believe that this glyph represents a verb

whose unknown meaning seemingly has little to do with old deity. As a putative verb, the God N glyph appears in a variety of contexts to be discussed momentarily.

Occasionally the God N glyph and its relatives are altogether absent from the introducing section of the PSS. In such cases it Is not unusual to find the combination tsi-bi immediately after the Initial glyph. In a previous paper I have outlined the evidence for reading this glyph *ts'ib,* to paint, draw" (Stuart 1987). 'Ibis glyph may tell us the manner of decoration of the vessel, but again this is a point we will soon discuss in fuller detail.

With few exceptions, the combination na-ha-la. or sometimes simply na-ha, follows *ts'ib. I* have combed the dictionaries for a reading based on *nahal,* but none seems adequate in this context. Perhaps this is rather some grammatical suffix to *ts'ib* ' but this is a matter best left open for the moment God N and ts'ib sometimes appear together, but in such instances the pronoun u is customarily added as a preflx to ts'ibi. Near the close of these initial glyphs, and immediately before the possessed noun of

the PSS, is found the combination hi-chi, occasionally spelled yi-chi. Macleod (1989) believes that this is related to the Yucatec term hech,"writing surface," and Tzeltalan jehch a classifter for pages. The apparent association of the *hichi* glyph with ts'ib. "to write, painir' is certainly in keeping with such a reading.

Our discussion of the structure of the PSS made note of the fact that ts'ib was an important element within the curious set of glyphs that preceded the possessed noun, or probable vessel reference. It was suggested that this was some allusion to the vessels painted mode of decoration, and indeed ts'ib occurs almost always on painted vessels. The numerous ceramic and stone vessels that bear relief carving or incised decoration do not have ts'ib in their PSS texts. In place of ts'ib on these vessels is the so-called "*1u*-bat" glyph. The pattern of co-occurrence is visible in nearly all inscribed Maya vessels with extended versions of the PSS. We may tentatively conclude that the *lu*-bat glyph somehow refers to the mode of decoration found on objects that are carved or incised rather than painted- The g1yph in question (Figure 6) usually appears as two signs, but in reality there are three constituents. '1he first sign is the syllable *yu* and the sec-

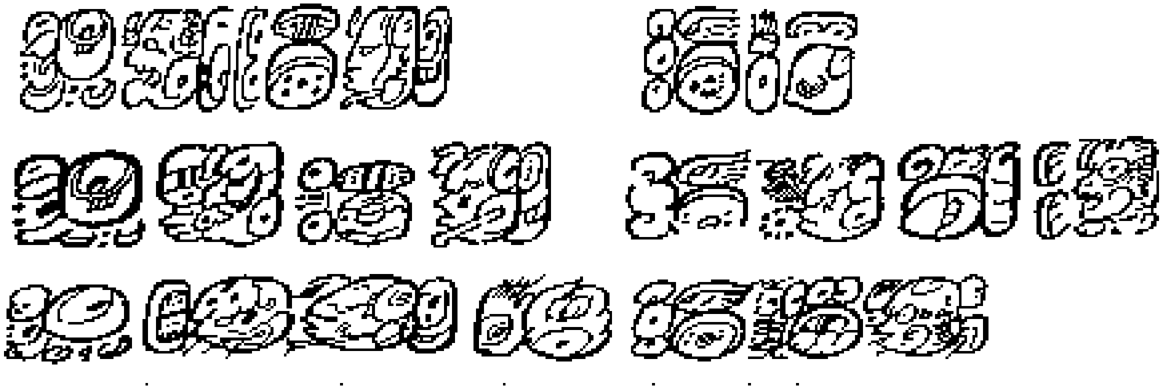

Figure 5. *Three PSS texts employ sequences of "introducing glyphs" before the Wing-Quincunx. Note the* ts'i-bi *spellin for* ts'ib, *"paint," before the* na *profile glyph in all three texts.*

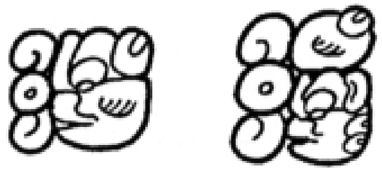

Figure 6. *The* lu-*bat glyph.*

ond represents the head of a bat. As we have seen on the Wing-Quincunx, *yu* sometimes serves to indicate the initial prevocalic pronoun y- ("his, her, its") before a noun or verb root beginning in u-. The sign may have a similar function here. Combined with the bat are the distinctive features of the *lu* syllable. In some examples, the lu and the bat signs are separated, revealing their proper reading order. The bat sign is not yet deciphered, although I previously felt that a similar sign may represent the syllable ts'i in some spellings of ts'ib. I doubt that this is the function here, however. Other circumstances of its use suggest that the bat head may correspond to another syllable altogether, perhaps of Consonant-u value. In any event, it remains impossible to venture a complete phonetic decipherment of the lu-bat glyph (yu-lu-?). We must remain cautious in any attempt to apply a precise translation to the lu-bat glyph. since no phonetic decipherment can yet be offered with assurance. Some meaning related to the act of carving or sculpting would fit the known environments of its use, but this is no guarantee of literal translation.

To summarize our findings thus far: The PSS as described first by Coe is similar to other texts on portable objects: it is, primarily, a descriptive "tag" for vessels of various types. The most fundamental tag simply names the owner of a given vessel, very likely the one for whom it was commissioned. More information about the vessel is presented in elaborations of this basic pattern. One extended form of the PSS speaks of the contents of the vessels, such as cacao drink. corn gruel, etc. The longest version of the PSS begins with a series of glyphs that, at least in part, may discuss the manner of the vessels decoration. Despite the inevitable variations on its internal structure, the PSS can be viewed as a fairly simple formula for tagging a vessel with the name of its owner and/or commissioner.

On rare occasion the PSS will have a Calendar Round date precede the introducing glyphs described above. I very much doubt that these dates relate in any way to the scenes rendered on pottery. Rather, given their placement in the PSS, I presume that these are the actual dates of the painting or carving of a given vessel. In addition to references to types of decoration and vessel function, the date is one more elaboration on the pattern we have seen.

The PSS is not restricted to vessels. Variations appear in a variety of contexts, and all are distinguished by the nature of the possessed noun. Let us look for example at a portion of the text inscribed on the front of Lintel 25 from Yaxchilán (Figure 7). In its structure, the passage is essentially the same as any text painted or carved around a vessel's rim. We find it beginning with a date (3 Imix 14 Ch'en), and the verb is represented by the familiar God N head. The *lu*-bat comes next, replacing the u-ts'ib-i seen on painted pottery, followed in turn by the possessed noun y-otot (yo-otot-ti), "the house of..." As we may expect, a personal name closes the passage. The house glyph here stands in the place of the Wing-Quincunx and related terms found on vessels, strengthening the interpretations of these glyphs as direct references to the objects upon which they are inscribed. The lintel of Yaxchilán was of course placed in an architectural setting, and its text "tags" the

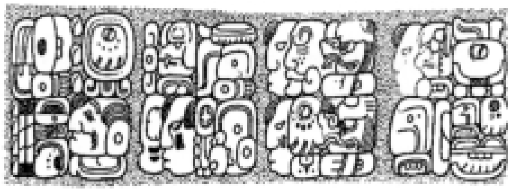

Figure 7. *A PSS-related passage from Yaxchilán, Lintel 25.*

building with the name of the owner, "Lady Fist-Fish." In all respects, then, this is a true PSS.

The same text formula was used as a tag on clothing. In the celebrated paintings at Bonampak, one figure wears a skirt bearing two visible glyphs (Figure 8). Obviously these are but parts of a longer text that continues in a horizontal band along the back of the skirt to the opposite side. Note that the two visible blocks are, respectively, the initial glyph and the God N head familiar from the Standard Sequence. A more complete text appears on the clothing of the standing female portrayed on one side of Calakmul, St. 9

Figure 8. *Glyphs painted on the hipcloth of a figure (HF 74) in the Bonampak murals.*
After Miller 1986, Fig.LLL.13.

(Marcus 1987:162-163). We see in this short chain of glyphs many of the vital components of PSS: the initial glyph, ts'ib, and the hi-chi combination. Clearly these constitute one of the forms of the introducing passage of the Standard Sequence. It is interesting to note, however, that the most vital component, the possessed noun, is hidden behind a sash that falls from above. Like the glyphs on the skirt at Bonampak, this is a text that is not meant to be read. It is more a feature of the woman's dress that is included as another detail in her portrait. The ancient viewer, knowledgeable of this name-tagging formula, would not need to see all the components of this text. Conveniently for us. the name of the woman does continue from behind the sash, however, and so we have no trouble identifying her portrait.

From examples such as these It is best to see the PSS as a formulaic expression for the name-tagging of numerous types of objects from daily and ritual life -- drinking vessels, clothing, monuments, and presumably other artifacts. Declarations of material ownership seems a pervasive trait of the Maya nobility.

PAINTERS' SIGNATURES

The ts'ib hieroglyph, as we have seen, appears in pottery texts as a possible reference to painted decoration on pottery. But we have yet to mention another important context of the glyph. On some painted vessels, u ts'ib appears outside the PSS as the initial element in texts of varying length. The structure of such texts never varies: u ts7h, "his painting...," followed by glyphs holding a personal name. The simple pattern can only be interpreted as an artist's signature. A brief glance at several examples of these putative "signatures" may allow us to recognize, by name, some of the celebrated artisans of Classic Maya civilization.

We begin with an illustration of one of the longest examples of this pattern. inscr1bed upon the lower edge of a vessel of unknown provenience that, as will be seen, may have come from the area of Naranjo, Guatemala (Figure 9). The u-ts'i-bi glyph is clearly recognizable at position X but this is not a part of the PSS, which may clearly be seen at the upper rim of this vessel. Certain elements of the three glyphs that appear after u-ts'i-bi show us that these together constitute a personal name. Note In particular the i-ts'a-ti glyph imbedded in the block at Z which very probably gives the word its'at, "artist, learned one." The block at X reads a-ma-xa-ma, perhaps for *ah maxam* "He of Maxam" (a place name?). Regrettably, we cannot read all the actual constituents of the individual's personal name at Y and the first part of Z. The protapnist's mother and father are named in the remaining thirteen glyph blocks. According to the text. the mother. named from C^1 to Q, is a lady from the site of Yaxha, Guatemala. The father's name, from S to W, is of very

special note: as Coe notes (1973), it is the name of a ruling lord of the ancient city-state of Naranjo. We therefore see a simple two-part structure to this lengthy chain of glyphs: u ts'ib, "the painting of ... " and an extended name phrase that includes information about the subjects immediate ancestry. Taken literally, and there is no reason not to do so, this second text must, I think. name the actual painter and calligrapher who decorated the surface of this elegant vase. The artist, or its'at as he is here called, was the child of the ruler of Naranjo. The signature on this vessel recalls the later documentary sources of central Mexico, such as the Relaci6n de Texcoco and the Florentine Codex, that mention nobles and their common roles as scholar-painters. Mythic and iconographic evidence reveal that the role of the artist, or itsat, was a common pursuit among Maya royalty as well. The signature of the Naranjo prince is the most explicit confirmation of this supposition from the ancient sources. Personal signatures are very rare in the history of art. With only a few exceptions, (Attic vase painters come immediately to mind) ancient painters and sculptors preferred to remain anonymous. In most ancient traditions, the identity of the artist was altogether subordinate to the larger significance of the work itself. I believe that this is certainly true in most Mesoamerican traditions of art. Aztec artists, for all we know of their philosophical outlook and social status (Le6n-Portilla 1959:258271), did not tag sculptures and paintings with markings that could be taken as personal signatures. The absence of artist's names is not due to the lack of a "true" system of writing in central Mexico. On the contrary, personal names were easily rendered in the Aztec script, even though in a somewhat simple system in light of Maya hieroglyphic writing. We must assume, therefore, that Aztec art was really never meant to be identified with the names of

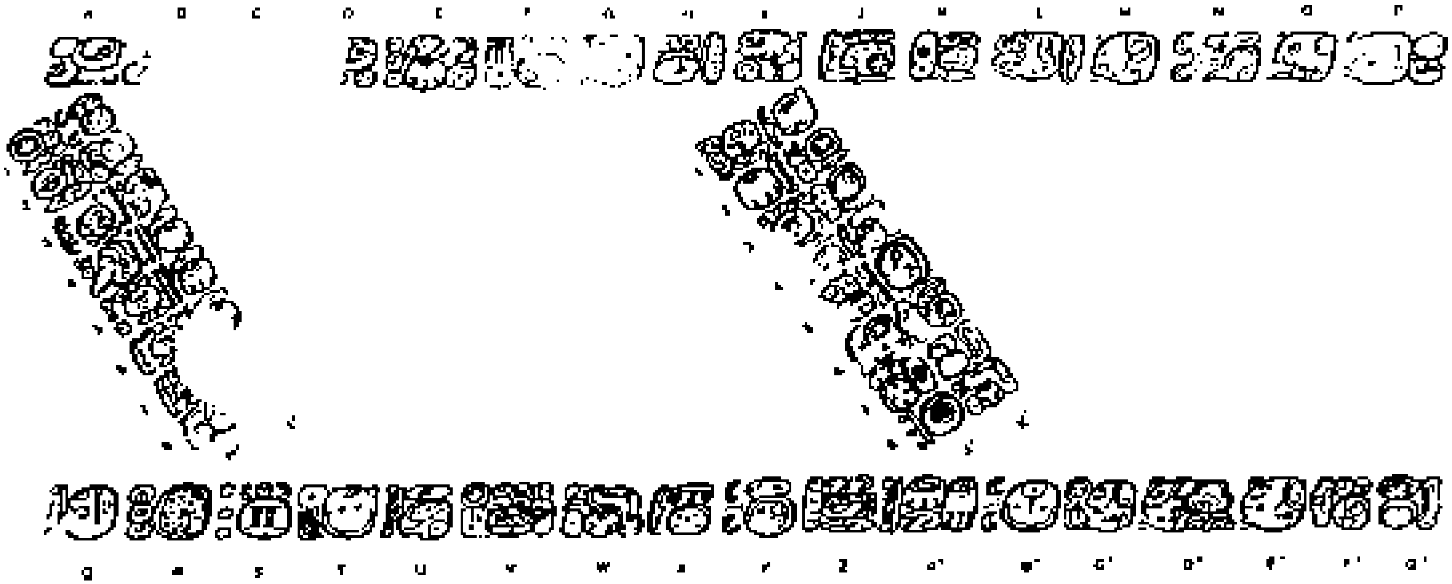

Figure 9. Rollout drawing of inscriptions on a cylindrical vessel. The painter's signature has been seperated out on the next page. (Figure 9a)
After Coe 1973, no.47

AA Kerr 635

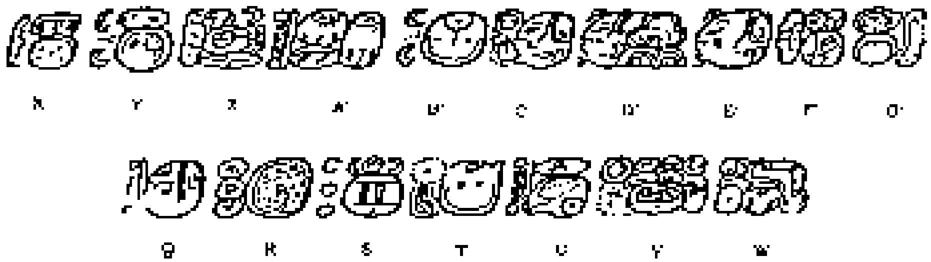

Figure 9a.

particular craftsmen. The sacred subject matter was not to be diminished by any intrusive, personal claim by the artist.

This makes the presence of signatures in Maya art all the more extraordinary. Early Maya sculpture and painting lack artists' names; signatures are only a characteristic of some Late Classic examples. Indeed, the span of time where we see sculptors' names at Piedras Negras lasts no more than 150 years. The signatures disappear with the onset of the Classic Maya collapse near 950 A.D. Within this short-lived period, we witness a profound deviation in the relationship between the artist and his work. Rather suddenly, the personal identities of painter and carvers carries real significance for the art itself For some reason that remains obscure, several painters of Late Classic times began to view their own names as important features of the works they undertook to create. Within a short time the signatures fall away, and the artists are once again anonymous. The cultural and psychological factors behind such momentous changes are fascinating, and pertain directly to profound questions of how an artist, and the society of which he is a part, views his own craft.

HEROGLYPHS AND THE PROVENIENCE OF VESSELS

It goes without saying that vessels lacking precise archaeological context limit our ability to understand these artifacts as cultural objects. But the inscriptions do allow us to identify the functions of some vessels and the names of individual artists and owners or patrons. Beyond this, glyphs do not hold many answers for reconstructing original provenience. Of course we have seen one vessel whose artist had family connections to the polity at Naranjo, and there is independent evidence that this and related vessels were manufactured at or near there (Reents Budet 1987). Coe (1978:96) suggests that Naranjo was where all the vessels were illicitly excavated. But can we be sure that the grave robbers actually found all of these pots at Naranjo? This sort of question is important (and often ignored) for anyone who works with unprovenienced material bearing hieroglyphic texts.

But. to reiterate, hieroglyphs do not necessarily tell us that much about the original context of looted artifacts. To illustrate this point we need look no further than the excavation reports. Archaeological evidence suggests that Maya artists often traded their polychrome pottery far from their point of manufacture. Adams (1977:412-413) Illustrates this point in his discussion of the vessels from Burials 96 and 128 at Altar de Sacrificios. On stylistic grounds, Adams concluded that 15 of the 19 pots in both burials "were imported from zones outside of the Altar de Sacrificios district.- These foreign vessels apparently were traded from the Middle Usumacinta region, the Central Peten, and the Alta Verapaz. I would not necessarily agree with Adams' conclusion that these pots were originally brought to that site as funerary offerings. It seems just as likely, at least, that such vessels traveled over time. gradually coming to be owned by the deceased.

Another group of related vessels of early Tepeu date are surely by the same artist, one of these have been found in Burial 72 at Mkal (Coe 1965:39; Coggins, 1975:Fig. 87) and another In Uaxactun Burial A23 (Smith 1955: Fig. 70. A third pot by this artist is in the Kerr archive (No. 1288). and a fourth is in the collections of the Duke University Museum of Art (Bishop. et al. 1985:Fig. 1a.b). The Tikal, Kerr, and Duke vases all name as their "owner" a Middle Classic Naranjo ruler called "Chief Double-Comb" by Closs (1985). It is very doubtful that Chief Double-Comb was the occupant of Burial 72 at Tikal, however. Similarly. it would be rash to conclude that the person named on the Uaxactun pot was the occupant of the tomb where the vessel was found. The same Is true, I think, of any example of Maya pottery in funerary context Archaeologists, including epigraphers and art historians, must therefore be careful in drawing their conclusions from information supplied by inscriptions on portable artifacts. With this said, it is quite conceivable that the three pots by Coe's Naranjo painter originated from two or three burials, if not different sites altogether.

To summarize, very many Maya "funerary' vessels, including the three in Naranjo style under discussion here, were used to hold cacao beverages. Most pots were traded far and probably well used before final resting in caches or with their owners in burials. Information provided by hieroglyphic texts on pottery can be very revealing about the persons who commissioned and decorated these vessels.

In briefly reviewing the PSS and artists' signatures on pottery, we see a reflection of the general advances made in recent years in the decipherment of Maya writing. Work in the specialized area of inscribed vessels has progressed rapidly, and will surely continue to do so. Of course, great credit for this must go to the availability of the Kerr archives of photographs. Publication of this monumental collection will surely lead to more exciting discoveries in glyphs and In most other aspects of ancient Maya culture.

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THE HERO TWINS: MYTH AND IMAGE

MICHAEL D. COE

BACKGROUND

I have been long puzzled by the curious absence of any but the most cursory references to the Popol Vuh, the sacred book of the Quiche Maya, in Eric Thompson's great and encyclopedic *Introduction to the Study of the Maya Hieroglyphs* (1950 and later editions). Surely he must have noted the striking fact that in both Quiche and Ixil, the name for the day Ahau, last of the twenty named days in the 260-day count, is Hunahpu -- first-born of the Hero Twins. Thompson was in many respects the greatest Mayanist of all, with a deep knowledge of mythology and ethnohistory, and was an outstanding Iconographer, but he completely missed the overwhelming significance of the Popol Vuh in solving many problems of Classic Maya iconography and epigraphy.

In my view, the first three parts of the Popol Vuh (using Dennis Tedlock's 1985 divisions of the text) constitute a mythic cycle on a par with the Ramayana and Mahabharata of Hindu literature, the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer, the Cycles of the Kings of early Ireland, and the Norse sagas. One might also compare them with the Arthurian cycle of pre-Anglo-Saxon Britain. In all of these one finds not only earlier eras in which the doings of great heroes are inextricably woven with those of gods, but also the charters for the elite groups which ruled these ancient societies. Even today, throughout the Hindu Buddhist world of South and Southeast Asia, the dynastic struggles of the Mahabharata and the royal adventures of the Ramayana come alive in numberless shadow-puppet plays and ballets performed in both villages and royal courts. Indeed, the actions of King Rama and his monkey army in winning back his queen are as alive to Balinese children as events of modem Indonesian political history.

Similar dramatic performances almost surely took place in the great cities of the Classic Maya, and persisted in the highlands following the Spanish conquest. One such display is documented for the K'ekchi' Maya, (Estrada Monroy 1979:168-74) and was tied into an assertion of suzerainty by a local Maya dynast, a "cacique of " caciques" named Aj Pop'o Batz (Lord Howler-monkey). This was held under the auspices of the Dominican friars of Verapaz on Sunday, 24 June 1543, to celebrate and affirm the foundation of a new town, San Juan Chamelco, and to consolidate the power of the native ruler. Lord Howler-monkey was seated upon a dais covered with monkey skin, while two warriors draped a quetzal-feather cape over his shoulders. After he had been duly baptized, and a Christian mass sung, the K'ekchi' drama began, to the sound of shell trumpets, turtle carapaces, and other instruments. This was the Dance of Hunahpu and Xbalanque, the Hero Twins, and their defeat of the Lords of the Underworld, Xibalba.

The performance opened with the appearance of two youths in the plaza, wearing tight-fitting garments and great black masks with horns. They proceeded to a platform covered with clean mats and adorned with artificial trees; a small brush pile covered a hidden exit. After conversing with two *nahuales* named Xul Ul and Pacan (the names of two diviners in the Popol Vuh; see Tedlock 1985,37?), they came into the presence of other masked beings--the dread Lords of Xibalba. The Xbalbans tried to kill the Hero Twins, but they evaded the dangers and emerged unscathed to the discomfiture of their enemies.

The youths then began to dance before the Underworld lords, the dance becoming progressively more violent and frenzied; little by little the lords became fascinated, until they also were caught up in

it. Hunahpu and Xbalanque appeared to fly above bonfires set around the periphery of the dance ground. Suddenly, unsuspected by the Xibalbans, they lit a multitude of incensarios, and in the midst of dense smoke they set fire to the grove of trees and to the mats. Everything turned into a great conflagration. Facing one another, with extended arms, Hunahpu and Xbalanque hurled themselves into the fire, which consumed the trapped Xibalbans, as well. The smoke from the copal obscured all that was taking place in the bonfire, and even those "in the know" were frightened by the cries of the dying lords. When the smoke cleared, only ashes remained.

Then, on the ground, a compartment opened up, from which issued an emissary cloaked in a feather cape; in one hand he carried an incensario, while with the other he indicated the open chamber. As drums, shell trumpets, and the like sounded, the Hero Twins appeared from the compartment. covered with beautiful feather capes, wearing on their brows ornaments appropriate to great lords. Their former masks had been replaced with those of two handsome youths. The Twins proudly greeted the populace, which acclaimed them for their victory over the fearsome Xibalbans.

The Twins' victory over Xibalba was probably widely celebrated in the Maya lowlands as well as the highlands, for Landa tells us that there was a dance called *Xibalba okot* held during the New Year ceremonies preceding Cauac years, in late pre-Conquest Yucatan. This was performed on the western road or *sacbe* leading to a statue of Uac Mitun Ahau, 1,ord of the Sixth Hell', at the entrance to the town (Tozzer 1941; 147). And there is some evidence that a dance-drama featuring the shooting of the arrogant bird-monster, Vucub Caquix (see below), by Hunahpu and Xbalanque was still enacted in colonial times In the Guatemalan highlands.

In fact, the Spanish friars were quick to grasp the utility of the "Harrowing of Hell" aspect of the Twins' triumph and divert it towards the Christian theme of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Curiously, in this pious transformation Hunahpu becomes an avatar of the Messiah, and Xbalanque a kind of devil or pagan god ruling over the Underworld. Needless to say, the dynastic function of the Popol Vuh cycle was steadily dissipated throughout the colonial period, as native princes. their lineages, and their courts lost power and eventually disappeared from the pages of history.

The Popol Vuh and the dawn of Maya civilization

The archaeological record as we now understand it makes it reasonably certain that Maya civilization took form during the Late Pre-Classic period, some time after 300 BC, by which time Olmec civilization had either disappeared or been transformed beyond recognition. It was this period that saw the flowering of Izapan culture on the Pacific coastal plain of Chiapas and Guatemala, of early Kaminaljuyu, and of such great lowland cities as El Mirador, Tikal, and Lamanai, with their prodigious architectural complexes and burgeoning populations. It is in this context that the Hero Twins cycle of the Popol Vuh first appears in Mesoamerican art and religion. Much of the evidence for it concerns the Vucub Caquix episode.

It appears that for the Maya, each previous world in the sequence of creations must have had its own "Sun", if information on central Mexican creation myths is pertinent here. In the Popol Vuh, the presiding god of the era preceding ours was Vucub Caquix. "Seven Macaw', who vaingloriously usurped the role of "Sun", but was not really a true sun. He "magnified himself', and boasted of the light he gave off :

> I am great. My place Is now higher than that of the human work, the human design. I am their sun and I am their light, and I am also their months.
>
> (Tedlock 1985: 86)

This creature was a gigantic bird-monster of magnificent appearance. The eyes of Vucub Caquix were of metal, his teeth glittered with jewels and turquoise (read "Jade" for Classic times), his nose shone white like the sun (note the anthropomorphism here), and his nest, like his eyes, was of shining metal. In a universe without a real sun, moon, or stars, the overproud bird puffed himself up on his perch, bragged, and gave off light for a race of wooden manikins that was to perish in the flood that destroyed this penultimate era. It is In the waning days of this creation that the Hero Twins myth is laid.

To vanquish Vucub Caquix -- antithesis of all behavior and values held dear by the Maya -- the gods sent the Hero Twins. The theme recalls native North American mythology, particularly in the Southwest, in which a pair of divine twins is created for the express purpose of annihilating monsters left over from previous, imperfect creations so that the people of our world may be left in peace.

Hunahpu and Xbalanque were handsome young lords, skilled in the ballgame and in hunting birds with their blowguns. The Twins knew that each day, the bird monster came to a nance tree to eat its fruit. There, Hunahpu shot him in the jaw with his blowgun, and broke his shining teeth. Angered, Vucub Caquix seized Hunahpu's arm and tore It off, hanging this grim trophy in his house. However, his teeth and eyes caused him intolerable pain, and the Twins, -- tricksters as well as heroes -- came to "cure" him. After replacing Vucub Caquix's aching teeth with white maize and tearing out his metallic eyes, the arrogant "Sun" of the last creation perished.

There is completely convincing iconographic evidence equating Vucub Caquix: with the Principal Bird Deity first defined by Lawrence Bardawil (1976). This major figure makes its debut in the artistic repertoire of Mesoamerica, during the Late Pre-Classic, particularly at Izapa and in Izapan-related cultures. To confirm the identification, three researchers (Taube 1980, Cortez n.d., and Lowe 1982) have independently recognized that Stela 25 at Izapa depicts not only Vucub Caquix and his nance tree, but also Hunahpu with his arm torn off (Figure 1). At the same site, the bird-monster descends to the nance, which is flanked by the Twins (Figure 2).

Figure 1. *Stela 25, Izapa (After Smith 1984, fig. 56-c*

On Stela 4, the creature plunges above a ruler who, Icarus-like, is fitted with Vucub Caquix wings (Figure 3).

A salient figure of Vucub Caquix (I will use the Quiche term throughout this paper) in early Mesoamerican iconography is the latch-like snout or drawn-out upper lip attached like a great, hooked beak to a somewhat anthropomorphic head, complete with flaring-nostril nose; the ac-

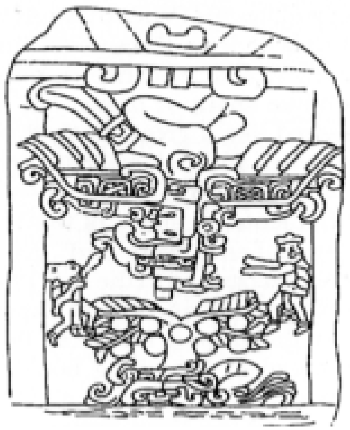

Figure 2. *Stela 2, Izapa (After Smith 1984, fig. 55-a*

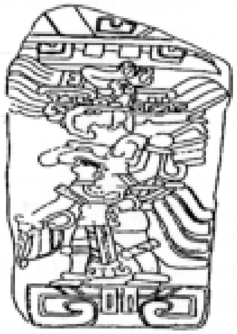

Figure 3. *Stela 4, Izapa (After Smith 1984, fig. 55-b)* (Back)

coutrements, in short. of what might be thought of as a "were-bird". As such, he maybe recognized in the Late Pre-Classic art of Monte Alban, on Tres Zapotes Stela D, in the Izapan reliefs of the Pacific coastal plain (including boulder sculptures at Monte Alto). at Kaminaljuyu and throughout the Maya lowlands. Many of the gigantic stucco heads which flank the staircases of Pre-Classic and Early Classic Maya temple-pyramids represent Vucub Caquix -- even though those who fashioned such images may have known him under another name.The Hero Twins' arrogant victim may be seen in diverse times and places in the lowlands, from Late Pre-Classic El Mirador and Cerros, to Early Classic Tikal (such as in the masks of Str. 5D-33-3rd; see Miller 1968;42), to the Late Classic reliefs of Palenque's Temple of the Cross and Sarcophagus, on which the Principal Bird Deity perches on a cruciform world-tree (Figure 4).

1 cannot go into the fascinating subject of Vucub Caquix in the detail that it merits, for after all, my theme here is the Hero Twins, but suffice it say that this major actor in the mythic cycle makes its abrupt appearance following on the heels of the disintegration of the old Olmec order of things, and when new sociopolitical entities, especially among the Maya, were taking shape. One may presume that this was the critical moment when the myth or myths, preserved in the earlier sections of the Popol Vuh, must have assumed their later form. Just as the gods and semi-divine kings of the Hindu epics provided charters for the nascent royal houses of Indian Asia, so the doings of Hunahpu and Xbalanque would have been the paradigm for new elites in southeastern Mesoamerica.

As I shall document below, Classic Maya pictorial ceramics are replete with Hero Twins imagery, including not only the Vucub Caquix episode, and the victorious encounter of the Twins with the Lords of the Underworld, but also episodes which have no counterpart in the Popol Vuh as it was written down after the Conquest. There are ramifications of this preoccupation with the divine pair throughout the Inscriptions, and even in the Post-Classic codices. Yet it is a fact that much of this imagery disappears with the Classic Maya collapse of the eighth century AD, never to reappear.

The great funerary ceramic tradition that characterized the Early and Late Classic found no place in the new order of the Post-Classic, testifying to a downfall of the elite as cataclysmic as that which befell the Yucatec Maya over six centuries later, with the Spanish conquest.

The Twins and the Palenque Trtad and the Lounsbury hypothesis

First presented at the 1980 Mesa Redonda at Palenque, an identification by my esteemed colleague Floyd Lounsbury (1985) of the deities GI and Gill of the Palenque

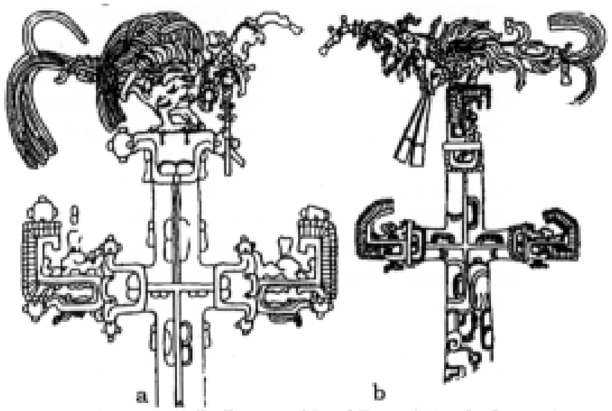

Figure 4. *The Principal Bird Deity(Vucub Caquix) perched on a world tree, Palenque. a. Temple of the Cross. b. Sarcophagous, Temple of the Inscriptions. (After Schele 1984:67*

Triad with Hunahpu and Xbalanque has received widespread acceptance, for instance by Schele and Miller (1986) and by Robicsek and Hales (1988). 1 feel that the evidence against this identification is strong. Before I present it, I will attempt to sum up Lounsbury's argument as follows:
1. In the texts of the tablets of the Cross Group at Palenque, a pair of mythological personages of the opposite sex are born shortly before the close of the last era (of 13 baktuns). The male has the same glyphic name as the later GI of the Triad. 2. The mating of these two produced three offspring. all born within our own era. These are *a*- GI (recognizable by the fish fins at the comers of the mouth and by the Spondylus shells over the ears), c GIl, born four days later, and *b*- GIII, born 14 days after Gll and, although not mentioned by Lounsbury, clearly the well known God K. a triplet of the other two (Figure 5).

3. According to Lounsbury, GIII is the Sun God. He has the Mah-Kina title as a prefix, followed by a cartouche containing a

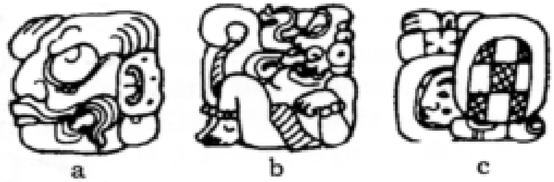

Figure 5 *Glyphs of the Palenque Triad. a, GI. b, GII. c, GIII. (Drawing - L. Schele)*

youthful head in profile, with a large circular spot on the cheek. generally before or above another cartouche with a plain-weave mat design. In addition, there is usually a T130 *(wa* or Vw) postfix. Lounsbury posits that the basic reading of GIII's glyph is *Ahau*, and identifies it with the Sun. Actually, I feel that this part of the argument is strong, but that it leads to a different conclusion than that which Lounsbury advocates.
4. If GIII is the Sun God, and if there are two GI's with the same name, then the "Junior" GI must be Hunahpu and the elder his Popol Vuh father, One Hunahpu. By a process of elimination, then GIII must then be Xbalanque (GII or God K is left unexplained).
5. The Popol Vuh text, however, presents a problem. At the conclusion of their triumph over Xibalba, the Twins ascend to the heavens, one of them (apparently Hunahpu) becoming the sun, and the other the moon, and not the other way around. To reverse this situation, Lounsbury marshals considerable linguistic evidence to show that Edmundson's translation as "Jaguar Deer" is faulty; *balan Is* certainly "Jaguar", but the *-que* could well be "sun", so that "Jaguar Sun" is a more likely meaning to the Quiche name. Lounsbury's view—also held by Thompson is that the Popol passage must be corrupt.
6. Iconographic evidence is also brought to bear, from exactly one source: the Metropolitan Museum of Art codex-style vase known as Grolier 46 and Princeton 4 (K512). This shows GI dancing with a sacrificial axe in hand to the left of an infantile, supine figure with both human and Jaguar features, lying on a Cauac Monster head. To the right is God A, one of the Maya death gods, with outstretched hands. Lounsbury wholeheartedly accepts the interpretation of this scene put forward by Foncerrada de Molina (1970, 1972) that this is Hunahpu (--GI) In the act of sacrificing Xbalanque during the final entertainment which they put on for the delight of the Xibalbans. He identifies the victim as his "Jaguar Sun" because of the filed teeth and Roman nose (both known to be solar attributes), and because of the Jaguar markings and tail.

To refute this argument in full detail would require a doctoral dissertation, but let me point out some flaws;
* GI is a well-known deity on a multitude of examples of Maya pottery and sculpture, throughout the Classic; for instance, see the many GI cache vessels illustrated by Helmuth (1987). There are the strongest iconographic and glyphic arguments for considering him the Classic version of God B. known as Chac in the lowlands. Further, GI is glyphically identified as Chac Xib Chac on an important codex-style plate (described in Schele and Miller

1986:3 10-1). To my knowledge, GI is never present in any Maya ceramic scene which can be ascribed to the doings of the Twins in Xibalba.
* Lounsbury hypothesis requires acceptance of not one, but *two* corruptions in the relevant text: in addition to implying that it was Hunahpu and not Xbalanque who turned into the sun, it also says that it was Xbalanque who sacrificed Hunahpu before the lords, and not the reverse.
* The scene of the sacrificial dance with GI and God A is found on a number of codex-style vases (Robicsek and Hales 1981, vessels 19-27; 1989). When present, the possible victim on the Cauac Monster runs the iconic gamut from a human child, to one with a Jaguar tall, to an anthropomorphic and infantile Jaguar God of the Underworld (JGU), to a fully feline Water-lily Jaguar. If this is Xbalanque, he is of almost protean variability. To prove that the little "victim" on the Metropolitan pot is Xbalanque, one would have to review many more than just one vessel.
* There is a far better candidate for Hunahpu in the Cross Group tablets than GI: this is GIII, The glyph T 1OOOc-f.i -- the youthful head with spot on cheek and one of the main Ingredient's in GIII's glyph -is the head form for the twentieth day, Ahau, read as "Hunahpu in the Quiche language.
* Thanks to the recent research of Karl Taube (1985, 1989). we know who Hunahpu's father, One Hunahpu, really was during the Maya Classic: he was God E. the familiar Maize God. He and his brother Seven Hunahpu are the 'Young Lords" whom I had initially mistaken for the Hero Twins on Maya pottery. On ceramics, the Maize God is tagged not only by his codical glyph (TI006), but by a more specifically "Hun Hunahpu" form. Thus we can rule out the head form of GI's name as that of Hun Hunahpu.

I therefore believe that the Lounsbury hypothesis Is untenable. In my opinion, the only path to knowledge in dealing with the incredible complexities of Maya iconography Is to examine all known occurrences of a particular iconic entity, and to analyze its behavior with other entities. Such a study would encompass not only the ceramics and codices, but the monumental art as well. For instance, to do ample justice to GI would require a long term study, covering everything from. the god's probable genesis as an Olmec shark deity until his final avatar as God B of the Post-Classic codices, with his lightning-axe.

I will admit to having no explanation of why GI's progenitor at Palenque should have the same name as his offspring, or why GI should have been born on the day 9 Wind (traditional birthdate of Quetzalcoati). There are many mysteries remaining in the tablets of the Cross Group.

The real Hunahpu and Xbalanque. glyphic identification

Before considering the glyphic and Iconographic evidence for the Classic (and Post-Classic) Hero Twins, I must recount a bit of personal history. When I was organizing the 1971 exhibit at the Grolier Club, I was struck by the frequency of pairs of almost identical young men on the pictorial ceramics that I was examining for the first time; these were usually identified as deities by devices on their torsos and limbs that I dubbed "godmarkings". by peculiar, tonsured "double domes". and by rich Jewelry. It was these beings that led me to the Popol Vuh, and which convinced me that the Hero Twins of the Popol Vuh Underworld cycle were present on this pottery. I christened them the 'Young Lords".

As I began work on the Grolier catalogue (Coe 1973) and, later on, on the Princeton exhibit (Coe 1978), it became apparent that there was another very distinct set of twin lords that I labeled the "Headband Gods" to distinguish them from the Young Lords. One had a single spot, or sometimes three of them on the cheek along with large spots on the body, while the

other had a patch of jaguar skin over the lower part of the face and similar patches as "god-markings". I soon drew the inference that it was *these* who were Hunahpu and Xbalanque, for reasons to become apparent later.

What then, was I to do with my "Young Lords'? As mentioned above, this problem has been brilliantly solved by Taube (1985): the tonsured Young Lords are the Hero Twins father and uncle One Hunahpu and Seven Hunahpu, slain in the Underworld. The "Disembodied Head" so frequently shown on polychrome plates is the head of One Hunahpu *which* magically impregnated Xquic, mother-to-be of Hunahpu and Xbalanque. Further Taube demonstrated that One Hunahpu is the young Maize God, his death and resurrection being a paradigm for the planting of the seed in the ground (its journey to Xibalba) and its germination (its resuscitation by maize's Hero Twin off-spring). The Hero Twins cycle is a parable not just of death, but of life itself.

The "decks are now cleared", so to speak, to deal with the *real* Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

The twentieth named day in the 260-day count is "Ahau" in Yucatec Maya. It its more abstract form on monuments in the area where Yucatec was spoken, the Ahau sign is often affixed with T168 (here read *ahau* and T130 (-W, confirming the reading *ahau* as given by Landa and other sources. In the monuments of the Classic sites of the southern lowlands, however, it usually appears in a more personified form -- either as a youthful head in profile with dot or dots on the cheek and with a headband, or in full-figure form (Figure 6). There is no question that this youth is one of the "Headband Gods". Now, in the table of names in various Mayan languages given for this day by Thompson (197 1;68). it is called Ahau in Yucatec, Chuh, and Jacalteca, and Aghualin in Tzeltal or Tzotzil. In IxiI and Quiche, significantly, it is *Hunahpu. Surely,* by the principle of Occam's razor, one can conclude that the Quiche Identified Hunahpu of the Hero Twins with the same day that is personified in the Classic inscriptions as the Headband God with spotted cheek.

I have already said that I am not averse to identifying GIII as Hunahpu in his aspect as Sun God, mainly because of the cartouched Hunahpu head, and the substitution of the whole glyph group by the indubitable head of the Sun God, but I think the case is far from proved; one would have to reach a more convincing reading for the woven-mat sign than that proposed by Lounsbury. Be that as it may, it was Hunahpu who was turned into the sun. and Thompson (1971:87-8) has fairly convincing arguments based on both Aztec and Maya data that the personified Ahau sign is the "young sun god". For instance, the patron of the corresponding Aztec day, Xochitl ("Flower") was Xochipilli (Flower Prince), very definitely the youthful sun.

Figure 6. *Full figure and head variants of the day-sign Ahau. (After Thompson 1971 fig.11)*

Let us now consider the personified glyphs of the Number 9 (Figure 7). The elements common to the head form in the inscriptions are 1. a youthful profile, 2. a patch of Jaguar skin over the lower face, often turning into a beard, and 3. a yax (T16) affixed to the forehead. Setting aside for the moment the yax sign, this is patently the other member of the Headband God pair shown on Classic Maya ceramics, even though the beard may not always be present, and even though both may be shown with dots only.

The nominal glyphs for both these supernaturals accompany them on ceramics and codices. It is accepted by most epigraphers (see Schele and Freidel 1989:25) that Hunahpu is named by the coefficient for "one- followed by the spotted Ahau face (T100 in its restricted sense), while Xbalanque is identified by the personified Number 9 glyph. In the Dresden Codex, of Early Post-Classic date, the main sign of both nominal glyphs is T1003c, prefixed in the case of Hunahpu with "one", and in the case of Xbalanque with yax (Figure 8). Although I use the Quiche names throughout this essay, the Classic names for the Hero Twins in the lowlands may have been Hun Ahau and possibly Yax Balam (Schele and F)reidel, ibid), which may also have been true for Post-Classic Yucatan.

Figure 7. *Head varients of number 9 (After Thompson 1971 fig.24, 50-55).*

In summary, the evidence of both image and writing supports the identification of the Headband Gods as the Hero Twins of the Popol Vuh and rules out any other avatars of these two in Classic times.

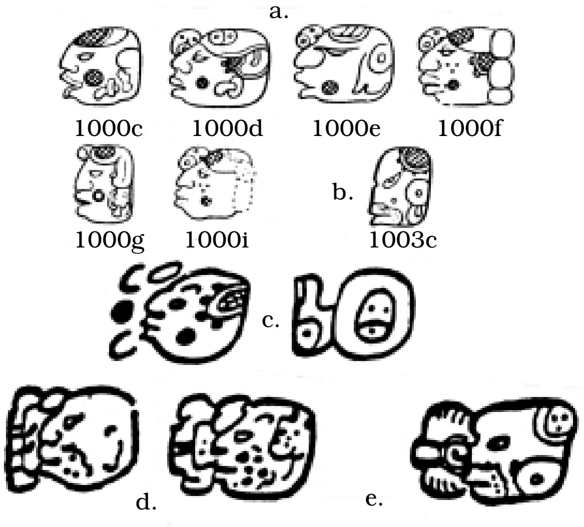

Figure 8. *Nominal Glyphs for Hunahpu and Xbalanque.*
a. T1000 forms for Hunaphu.
b.Main sign for twins in the codices.
c. Glyphs for Hunaphu on pottery.
d.Glyphs for Xbalanque on pottery.
e. Xbalanque nominal glyph from the codices. (a., b., after Thompson 1962;457. c.-e., after Schele1987)

HUNAHPU AND XBALANQUE: THEIR LIFE AND TIMES

I will now discuss various happenings in the lives of the Headband Gods, Hunahpu and Xbalanque, influenced in part by the extant Hero Twins cycle in the Popol Vuh; as I have done before, I would like to emphasize that this cycle presents only *part* of what may have been a very long, complex epic, for there are scenes on the pottery which have absolutely no counter part in that great book. Moreover, there are things visualized on the ceramics which are connected with the cycle, for example the Hun Batz and Hun Chuen monkey-men episode (Coe 1977),which leave out the Hero Twins even though they played a role in the narrative.

The defeat of Vucub Caquix

The Hero Twins are the blowgunners par excellence. The very name of Hunahpu, as Tedlock (1985:341) makes clear, is composed of *hun* "one"; *ah-*, occupational; and *pu* from puh "blowgun". Thus, the name as a whole could be read as "One Blowgunner". The complete attire of

Hunahpu as a hunter can be seen on a beautiful carved slate scepter from the late classic period (Figure 9): he wears the broad-brimmed "hunter's hat" of plaited straw, a fringed kilt, and sandals, and he holds at rest his long blowgun with the left hand, while in the right hand he holds a cigar or smoking tube to his lips. On the other side of this object is a portrait of the Maya ruler himself, presumably the personage for whom it was made *Kerr n*.d.: 17). It may be that the ruler had himself depicted as Hunahpu, the eternal prototype of all kings, for the glyphic text accompanying the scenes relate to the ruler's titles.

Figure 9. Slate "sceptre" with figure of Hunapu as hunter. File no. K3409

Pusilha Sceptre K3409

Figure 10. *Codex style vase, Hunaphu nshoots Vucub Caquix* *File no. K1226*

That this identification of the spotted youth with hunter's hat as Hunahpu is absolutely correct Is proved by a codex-style vase first published by Robicsek and Hales (1982, no.20), now universally accepted as the shooting of Vucub Caquix by Hunahpu (Figure 10). The vase shows Hunahpu squatting on his haunches in front of a Cauac Monster (presumably a hill or mountain); he wears substantially the same costume as the figure on the slate scepter. The blowgun pellet is aimed at the Principal Bird Deity, in the form of a God D head with wings. Infixed in the God D's head is the mirror glyph)T617), which also appears at the foot of the tree and in the head of the deity at the tree's base. Justin Kerr (personal communication) has advanced the interesting suggestion that the Jaguar paw extending from behind the tree trunk belongs to the hidden Xbalanque. According to the vertical text, the shooting takes place on 1 Ahau 3 Kankin (misread as 3 Yaxkin by Roblesck and Hales); 1 Ahau, of course, is the "official" date of the great helical rising of the Morning Star in the 104-year Venus calendar of Mesoamerica.

Hunahpu also wears his hunting outfit on another codex-style vase (Figure 11), in a scene in which he shoots not a bird but a quadruped perched in a tree. This basically unidentifiable creature has a long tail and an ear with toad markings. Another personage with a headdress pierced with what may be brush pens reclines to one side. One of the two glyphs below the rim is Hunahpu's own name, (T1.1000c-f)

Best known of all Maya blowgunner images is the famous Blom Plate (Figure 12), said to be from Quintana. Roo (Blom 1950). The Hero Twins are here depicted

Figure 12. *Detail; the Blom Plate, The Hero Twins shoot Vucub Caquix after Hellmuth 1987, ill. 425)*

as the Headband Twins; instead of hunter's hats, they wear distinctive headbands. Both are marked with black spots, and direct blowgun pellets at the Principal Bird Deity -- Vucub Caquix with a fantastic. Long beaked bird headdress. Although the distinctive jaguar-pelt patches of Xbalanque are missing here, the Twin on the left is seated on a jaguar-pelt throne, possibly a substitute for the usual god-markings.

A somewhat abbreviated version of the theme can be found to the right of the scene on a polychrome vase published as Princeton 8 (Fig. 13). Hunahpu with headband and fringed kilt has shot a downed, anthropomorphic Vulture God (the ta vulture of the codices), perhaps a version of the more usual Principal Bird Deity.

But without doubt the greatest of all pictorial representations of the shooting of Vucub Caquix is a truly magnificent early Classic double cylindrical vessel said to be from Rio Azul in northeastern Guatemala (Figure 14).

> And when Seven Macaw arrived, perched over his meal, the nance, it was then that he was shot by Hunahpu. The blowgun shot went right to his jaw, breaking his mouth. (Tedlock 1985:91-2)

Figure 13. *Detail from polychrome vase. Hunaphu shooting the Vulture God. File no. K555*

Figure 11. *Codex style vase, Hunaphu shoots a quadruped in a tree* *File no. K1345*

(BACK)

Figure 14. *Early Classic double-cylinder vase. The shooting of Vucub Caquix File no. 3105*

Figure 15 *Hunahpu as ballplayer, Naj Tunich Cave (Drawing by Andrea Stone)*

The great bird-monster, engaged in "self-magnification", with huge wings raised, towers over the tableau. That he is the "sun" of the penultimate creation is made manifest by his sun-god eyes, and by the *K'in* sign on the back of his right wing. Pendant from his latch-like beak is the pop knot of rulership, an iconographic detail which can be matched in the images of Vucub Caquix on the world-trees of the Temple of the Cross and the TI Sarcophagus lid at Palenque.

Crouched in shooting posture on the opposite cylinder, Hunahpu takes aim at the bird. Three dots on his cheek leave no doubt that this is Hunahpu, "One Blowgunner-, and he is girded with his hunters fringed kilt. Between the two cylinders Is a third figure, kneeling and raising an object towards the bird-monster. Could this be Xbalanque- extending toward Vucub Caquix the fatal "white corn" that they mischievously gave him as a replacement for his destroyed teeth? If so, then it might also be Xbalanque with "white corn" in his hand who kneels before the birdmonster on another Early Classic double cylinder vessel in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Coe 1987:ill.49).

The Hero Twins as ballplayers

Having established the skin markings and distinctive costume of the Hero Twins, it is a relatively simple matter to recognize the subject matter of Drawing 21 in the cave of NaJ Tunich (Figure 15); this is Hunahpu, with his hunter's hat (apparently also worn in the ballgame), standing before a staircase and a large rubber ball: he has the protective "yoke" on the upper part of the chest, a long Jaguar pelt below it, and a knee guard.

We owe to Linda Schele (1987) the identification of the two figures on the central marker of Ballcourt IIb at Copán as Hunahpu (whom she calls the "Hun Ahau Twin'j, facing the half-kneeling ruler 18 Rabbit in his guise as God of Zero (Fig. 16). She is also to be credited with recognizing not only the "Chicchan variant" of Hunahpu's name glyph, but also the vase and codical forms of Xbalanque's name (see below).

Figure 16. *Central marker of Ballcourt IIb, Copán (after Barbara Fash 1987*

Although Hunaphu and Xbalanque are identifiable ballplayers in these examples of Maya art -- which is expected, given the importance of the game they play with the Underworld Lords in the Popol Vuh — it is by no means easy to pick them out in ballgame, scenes on Maya pottery. There is certainly some pattern to the kinds of headdresses worn by the principal players, often involving a deer head and the head of a long-beaked bird, but whether those who wear such headgear are the Hero Twins, or their father and uncle, or one of the twins facing a Xibalban lord, cannot be decided at present. It should be noted , though, that the characteristic facial and body markings of the Hero twins are absent.

Hunahpu lets his blood

For the moment. we shall leave the main story line of the Popol Vuh to examine episodes in the lives of the Twins which have no obvious counterpart in that great epic. One of these is blood sacrifice by penis perforation. That this important ritual act was performed not only in late pre-Conquest times but in the Classic era, is a fact that was brought to light by Thompson in a pioneering article of 1961. On a polychrome vase said to be from Huehuetenango (Gordon and Mason 192528.pl.27), he recognized that six gods squatting over bowls were engaged

Figure 17. *Hunahpu drawing his own blood. Huehuetenango Vase. (after Gordon amd Mason 1925-28, pl.27)*

in drawing blood from the penis by means of the instrument which each held in the hand. One of these deities can be none other than Hunahpu (Figure 17).

David Joralemon enlarged on this theme in 1974, and demonstrated that the perforator itself was deified, distinguished by a headdress with a distinctive stack of knots (usually three in number). Such an instrument can be seen on a polychrome plate (Figure 18). grasped in the left hand of Hunahpu in his guise as Headband God; here, Hunahpu is enthroned on a Cauac glyph, which itself Indicates stone "altar' or throne.

The Hero Twins in *the presence of Itzamna*

At one time I had considered that Gods N (Pauahtun) and L were co-rulers in the Underworld, and that only those two were prime over the denizens of Xibalba. But I realize now that there is a third regent among the supernaturals pictured on Maya ceramics, namely God D or Itzamna, a divinity usually connected with the sky and (according to our post-Conquest sources), the supreme being and creator of the universe. That he should also appear in Xibalba is less of a contradiction than it first appears, for in central Mexico, the Aztec equivalent of Itzamna. -- the old male/female Ometecuhth -- has his/her counterpart in the personage of Mictlantecuhtli, lord of the Land of the Dead. These are just two sides of the same coin, so to speak.

Be that as it may, at some point in the extended Hero Twins cycle. they appear in the court of God D. On a codex-style vase (Figure 19). the seated Twins flank the slouched-over, aged god, who points to a bowl from which a tree rises; this is the crocodile tree, seemingly the same one depicted as Vucub Caquix's perch on Stela 25 at Izapa. Hunahpu is on the left, and judging from his hunter's hat it may be that he is fresh from his victory over the bird-monster. Unfortunately, the head on the right-hand figure is worn; this may be Xbalanque. but there are no god-markings on the body. [editors note: Careful examination of the eroded figure does indeed suggest that the figure is Xbalanque. The alligator tree with "yax" attached to his snout may in fact be Zipacna, one of the sons of Vucub Caquix, accounting for his presence on Izapa Stela 25.]

Figure 18. *Hunahpu with perforator. Polychrome plate (Drawing Karl Taube)*

Figure 19. *Codex-style vase, the Hero Twins in the court of God D. File no. K1607*

BACK

God D Is seated upon a sky-band throne on a marvelous polychrome cylindrical vase (Fig.20) described by Robicsek and Hales (982:no.7). Before him is a deep vase heaped with offerings which include a skeletonized head. In an antechamber are Xbalanque who, although lacking god markings or the headband, wears the Jester God headdress, and Hunahpu, with headband. Both Twins have bejeweled short capes and the hinged kilt The beautiful text at the top is the PSS -- of special interest is the "Flat-hand Verb" at B which looks like OC in the Lunar Series (with the JGU as patron), and the glyph at position 1. which Robicsek and Hales identify as Xbalanque. While they may be right about that. they further identify J as Hunahpu, "GI of the Palenque Triad of Gods", a highly unlikely proposition. The middle glyph in both secondary texts is the "Chicchan God" variant for the main sign of the Hero Twins' names -- in this case, the dot on the cheek probably indicates Hunahpu alone.

There is an Early Classic precedent for scenes on these Late Classic vases; a stuccoed and painted tripod from an Esperanza Phase tomb at Kaminaljuyu, which has two painted panels, each with God D receiving the homage of a Hero Twin (Figure 21).

The Hero Twvins and the Deer Ritual

A still intractable problem is the role of deer in Maya beliefs about the Underworld, at least as depicted on Classic Maya pottery. Given the close association of deer representations with death symbolism, there can be no doubt that this creature was a very important chthonic deity, in some way connected with the history of the Hero Twins. Let us consider a famous and often-published vase at Dumbarton Oaks (Figure 22), said to be from northern Yucatan. There are two related scenes on the vase, separated by a world-tree and waterlilies arising from the crown of the JGUs head. On the left are two youths with black spots on the body (shown by cross-hatching), each holding two

Figure 20. *Polychrome vase, The Hero Twins appear before God D. File no. K1183*

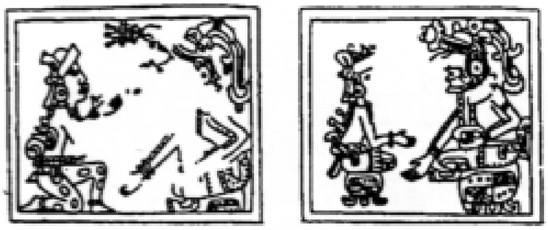

Figure 21 Panels from an Early Classic stuccoed tripod, Kaminaljuyu. The Hero Twins before God D. (After Hellmuth 1987 ill. 436)

flint-tipped spears or darts. One is engaged in plucking off the antlers from a deer wearing a blanket embellished with crossed longbones, while the other sounds a conch-shell trumpet. Descending from above is the Vulture God, complete with headband as in Figure 13.

On the far right of the world-tree is an armed youth, also blowing a conch, and two spotted youths with capes, seated on either side of the tree. Below are two deer who have had their antlers removed.

One could argue about the multiplicity of "twins" here, and over why the Jaguar god-markings of Xbalanque are absent, but both Twins are similarly marked as a kind of double-Hunahpu on the Blom Plate and on the Vase of the 31 Gods (Coe 1973;no.37, Figures I and 4); in fact, Xbalanque's markings seem to be of less iconographic significance than those of Hunahpu. Furthermore, both Twins are unmistakably distinguished in a deer ritual pictured on a tall polychrome vase of unknown provenance (Figure 23). In the top register, Hunahpu and Xbalanque are in the presence of God D in the gesture of submission, before a bowl filled with offerings. Below, the Twins hold tree fronds in their hands on either side of a seated Deer God; the deer's cloak has crossbones and death-eyes. An anthropomorphic Bat God stands just in back of Hunahpu. removing any doubt that this takes place in Xibalba. To the left is a Cauac: Monster cave, sheltering a small, rat-like animal.

Although badly eroded in places. this vase could repay further study. For instance, there are interesting details of costume and of personal ornament which might give iconographic clues for the identification of the Twins on other vessels; note, for example, that both have long, bound hanks of hair, while above Xbalanque's ear is an "extra' Jaguar car and above that of Hunahpu a hybrid 'extra" ear which suggests both a deer's ear and a Muan Bird feather.

The same tree frond is held between the open arms of Xbalanque on an important plate, perhaps of Campeche origin (Figure 24): here the young god is seated on a double po-throne (for *pop*, "mat" or "rulership". and a pop-mat sign is at his back. Above and to the right of his head, as part of the text, is the nominal glyph of Xbalanque, inexplicably prefixed by a mo (17582) sign.

The Hero Twins and the Resurrection of One Hunahpu

We come now to one of the most important episodes in the Hero Twins story, which, while a major theme on the ceramics, receives only fleeting references in the Popol Vuh, sure evidence that we have in

Figure 22. *Polychrome vase at Dubarton Oaks. Deer Ritual File no. K2785*

the text a somewhat truncated version of the original epic. In fact, it must be admitted that the Popol Vuh obfuscates more than clarifies this particular subject.
The written story places the resurrection event just after the defeat of the Xibalbans by the Hero Twins, and at about the same time that the corn ears planted by them in their grandmother's house sprouted as a sign of their own survival. The text says:

> And they saw the face of their father again, there in Xibalba. Their father spoke to them again when they had defeated Xibalba.
> And here their father is put back together by them. They put Seven Hunahpu back together; they went to the Place of Ball Games Sacrifice to put him together.
> (Tedlock 1985:159)

Here we have a problem: their father was not Seven, but One Hunahpu. This scribal slip-up is understandable, since in the preceding lines, both are named as "their fathers".

So, in the Popol Vuh there are two resurrection stories; one concerning the sprouting of maize on the surface of the earth, and the other dealing with the head and body of One (or Seven) Hunahpu, The iconography of pictorial ceramics tells us that these ideas were not separate in Classic times. Now, it will be remembered that

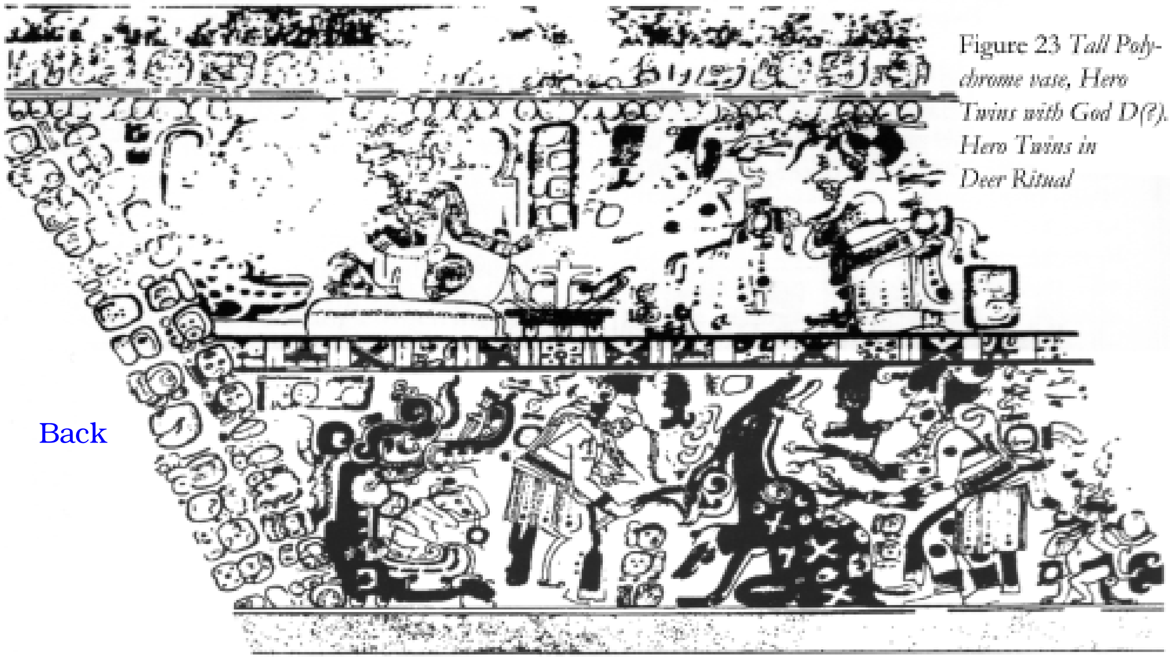

Figure 23 *Tall Polychrome vase, Hero Twins with God D(?). Hero Twins in Deer Ritual*

Back

Figure 24 *Polychrome plate with figure of Xbalanque (After Hellmuth 1987, ill. 435)*

Taube has demonstrated that One Hunahpu and the Maize God are one and the same; crucial to his argument were several of the vessels that will be described here.

Let us first identify the resurrection theme itself and the principal actors. 1bere seem to be general agreement among those who have studied the great codex-style plate shown in Figure 25 that the Maize God

Figure 25. *Codex-style plate. Ressurrection of one Hunaphu. File no. K1892*

One Hunahpu, with his jewelled finery is emerging from a split turtle carapace representing the earth's surface. It floats on water, as indicated by the waterlily and other symbols below. To the left of Hun Hunahpu's head is his nominal glyph, with the "corn curl" infix. On the left side of the. scene is his son Hunahpu, with the hybrid deers-ear/Muan-bird feather above his own ear, together with his name glyph; on the right is Xbalanque, with Jaguar-ear just above his own, and a screech-owl headdress without the usual feathers. His name glyph can be seen just to the left of the headdress. Xbalanque is in the act of inverting an Akbal jar, probably to water the sprouting and resurrected maize: his own father.

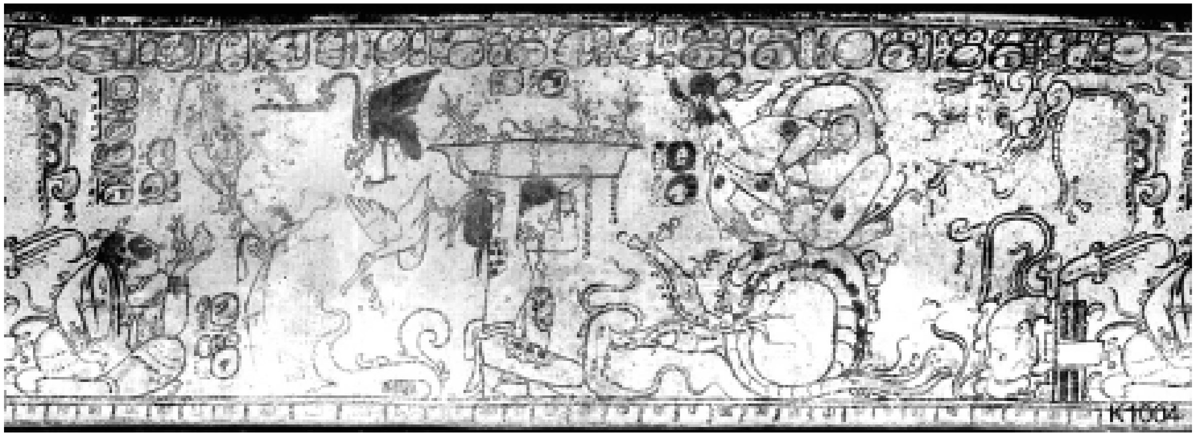

Figure 27. *Codex-style vase. The Hero Twins Collect the head and finery of their father.* *File no. K 1004*

Hun Hunahpu is thus seen emerging from the Underworld (symbolized by the Akbal skull on the side of the carapace), and through the earth's surface. This was the ultimate metaphor for a people for whom maize was life itself. The descent into Xibalba by Hun Hunahpu and his brother, followed by their sacrificial death. parallels the farmer planting his corn seed in a hole in the ground at the end of the dry season; the resurrection of Hun Hunahpu by the Hero Twins invokes the germination of the seed and sprouting of the young corn plant with the arrival of the rains.

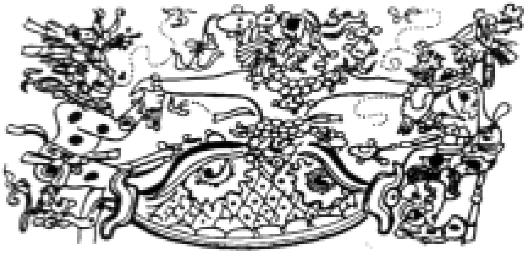
Figure 26 *Detail from polychrome bowl, Ressurrection of One Hunahpu (After Hellmuth 1987 ill. 438)*

This glorious culmination to the Hero Twins epoch is found elsewhere in the Maya ceramic corpus. On a deep, polychrome bowl (Figure 26). the Maize God is helped from the split turtle-shell by the physical efforts of Hunahpu and Xbalanque, who tug at his arms to free him from the earth. Both sons are attired as Headband Gods.

The Popol Vuh text states that the Twins actually reassembled their father in Xibalba, and that may well be what is going on an extraordinarily complex codex-style vase (Figure 27) that has been described by Robicsek and Hales (1982, no. 12). 1 will concern myself only with the right-hand part of the rollout. The Hero Twins are both present, depicted with their telltale god-markings. As recognized by Schele (1987), the nominal glyphs for both Twins are present, Hunahpu's being prefixed by a thumb -- for the coefficient "one" -- and the day-sign Ahau for the main sign. Robicsek and Hales call this scene "Nourishment of the Gods". based on their interpretation of the items in the dish borne on high by Xbalanque as blood-letting paraphernalia. I interpret

them very differently: to me, they are the severed head and regalia of Hun Hunahpu, gathered by his sons for reassemblage and resurrection, "'Your name will not be lost", they said, 'We merely cleared the road of your death, your loss, your pain, the suffering that were inflicted upon you--"

The Hero Twins in the codices

The possibility that Hunahpu and Xbalanque appear in the codices was first raised by John Henderson in an important but unfortunately unpublished paper. In fact, they are to be found in both the Dresden and Madrid Codex.

It should be pointed out from the outset that the codical name glyphs of the Twins differ slightly in their main sign from their Classic forms; this is T1003c. confusingly attributed to a so-called "Chicchan God". apparently because the crosshatched element in the head is also to be found in the day sign Chicchan. Whatever the *raison d'etre* for such an infix in these nominal glyphs, it can have little to do with either the day name or snakes [the Chichan itself is, indeed, a serpent god).

The first appearance of Hunahpu in the Dresden is at the top of page 2 (Figure 28a). In a 5x52 tzolkin table, the decapitated Hunahpu, identifiable by his black-

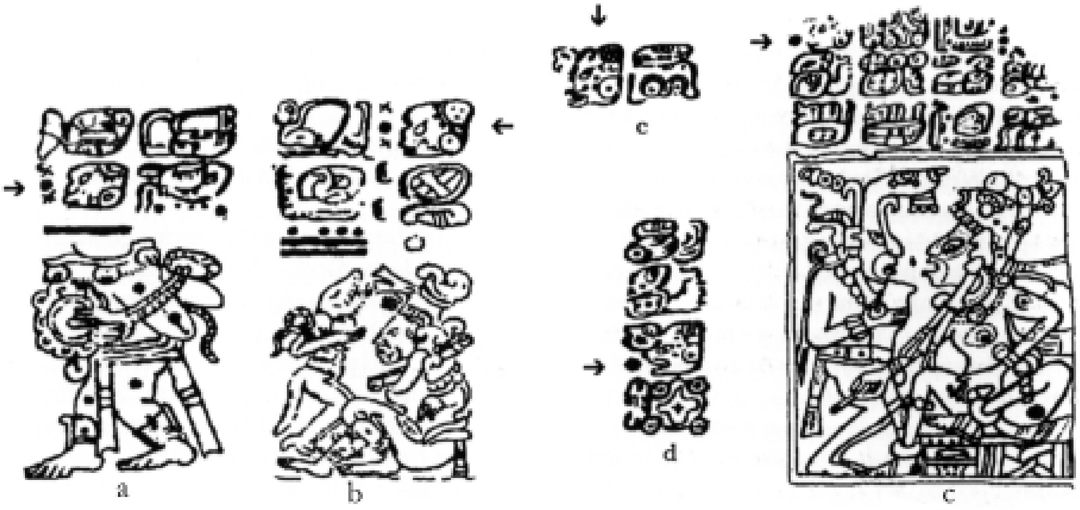

Figure 28. *Hunahpu in the Dresden Codex. (The arrows indicate Hunahpu's nominal glyphs). a., D2a. b., D3a. d., D49a. e., D50a.*

spotted body, strides along with arms bound behind the back. The four-glyph sentence in the block above the picture opens at A1 with T190.758, a verb for beheading which also occurs on the Altar de Sacrificios Vase with God A'. At A2 is Hunahpu's name, T1.1003c. The sentence closes with the sign for death. It will be recalled that Hunahpu really did die in the story, if only temporarily -- inside the Bat House, when a "snatch-bat:' took off his head.

Next, on page 3a of the Dresden, Hunahpu is taken captive (Figure 28b), in a complex 5x52 tzolkin in which the days zigzag
back and forth across a world tree which rises from the open chest of a sacrificed nude captive, On the lower right. Hunahpu sits bound, facing another captive (some kind of unidentifiable animal, perhaps a lizard). The first two glyphs of the block above read *chucah Hunahpu,* "Hunahpu was captured".

Far more significant to the understanding of the Hero Twins in ancient Maya thought is Hunahpu's role in the Dresden Venus Tables, the principal subject of Henderson's investigation. Before we delve into this subject, however, a few technical remarks are in order concerning Venus Gods and Venus Regents in this body of data. As has been known for over a century, the Maya based their Venus calendar on the fact that five synodic revolutions of the planet, each consisting

of 584 days, are equal to eight haabs of 365 days each; this is why there are five pages to the calendar as it appears on Dresden 47-50. Each page is divided vertically into Its periods: Superior Conjunction, Evening Star, Inferior Conjunction, and Morning Star.

Listed for each of the 20 (5x4) periods of the table are a world-direction and a Venus Regent; thus, there are 20 Regents altogether. 'These are to be distinguished from the Venus Gods, who represent the planet in its first appearance in the eastern sky, that is, during heliacal rising as Morning Star following Inferior Conjunction. There are five such gods, shown hurling darts at victims In pictures spread across the middle section of pages 46-50; they are cognate to similar figures In the central Mexican codices (see *Kelley 1976:73*83 for a thorough discussion of Venus deities).

It has been established that the glyph In first position in the lower series on each Dresden page corresponds to the deity enthroned in the upper right section of that page. Similarly, the identical name glyph appears as the final sign in the middle position on the preceding page. We can therefore class the seated gods In these pictures as Regents of the Morning Star, in the east. With that in mind, let us now turn to page 50. Here we have a personage (Figure 28e) seated upon a sky-band throne; his body is covered with black spots, immediately suggesting that we are confronted with Hunahpu. This is a very sinister Hero Twin, however, since he is adorned with a death collar and a skull headdress. Topping the latter is a device which suggested to Henderson the Aztec day sign Xochitl or Flower, corresponding as the twentieth day to Ahau or Hunahpu in the Maya day count.

Facing the enthroned personage Is God E -- the Matze God - -holding what may be a ceramic drum. Now, the corresponding name glyph in both positions appropriate for the enthroned deity is T1.1003c. the name of Hunahpu, the "one" coefficient being superfixed with an element which might be phonetic (Figure 28d).'The same nominal glyph appears once more on page 24 (Figure 28c), as one of the Venus Regents in the calculation table for the Venus calendar, and in damaged form at the top of page 50. In all three cases, Hunahpu's name Is followed by the glyph group which reads *chac ek*, "Great Star". i.e. Venus.

But what about the denouement of the Popol Vuh account, in which Hunahpu and Xbalanque become the sun and the moon (or, in Tedlock's translation, "the sun belongs to one and the moon to the other")? Sadly, the Popol Vuh does not tell us which belongs to which, but since Hunahpu and Xbalanque are always named in that order, it is reasonable to suppose that it should be Hunahpu/sun and Xbalanque/moon. However, basing himself upon a deep familiarity with contemporary Maya legends. Thompson (1971: 218-9) rejected the notion that one Twin becomes the moon, since the latter is always female among the Maya, and wife of the sun (actually, the Popol Vuh may not be entirely wrong in its scheme, as a young lunar deity, apparently male, is twinned with Hunahpu on the Pearlman Shell Trumpet). In modem Maya thought, the sun and Venus are brothers. Ergo, Hunahpu is Venus and his brother Xbalanque is the sun. This is all compelling logic, and is one of the arguments advanced by Lounsbury for his hypothesis, but I doubt whether the somewhat confused and ambiguous evidence will allow us to say at present any more than this: in the Dresden Codex Hunahpu was a Venus Regent associated with the Morning Star -- but so was the Moon Goddess!

Finally. what is the evidence in the codices for Xbalanque? The Resurrection Plate has told us what his nominal glyph should look like; yax (*Green" or "new"), followed by a main sign; On the plate, this sign is the head of the god with Jaguar-skin patch over the lower face -- as it is in the head variant for Number

Nine. In the codices. it is the same "Chicchan God" head that is used for Hunahpu.
This nominal glyph can be found in a 4x65 day tzolkin on Dresden 23b, in a text which lists the inauguration dates and appropriate offerings for a series of gods, of whom Xbalanque Is one (Figure 29a). On page 7 of the same codex, in a 5x52 tzolkin. the god, with pelage markings on the body, is seated with hand raised as though in discourse (Figure 29b). A hummingbird hovers head down before his mouth; the beak of the same bird appears affixed to the mouth of God D, Itzamna?, in another picture within the same tzolkin. The first two glyphs of the text accompanying each of the four principles in this tzolkin are the same: *ts'un u chich. Now, ts'unun is* "hummingbird" in many Mayan languages, Including Yucatec. Could the glyph group be a variant of this word? Thee second syllabic glyph of the group is T149, *nu,* visually already a reduplicated sign. Possibly by not repeating the *nu* they avoided further duplication which would have been confusing to the reader. The word *chich is* generally glossed in Yucatec as "word" or "discourse" ' The entire text could thus read "hummingbird his word, Xbalanque, his burial," (*u muc,* a common augury for days of bad omen).

A third appearance of the younger Twin in the Dresden is on page 21, in another 5x52 tzolkin. in which the young Moon Goddess is coupled with various deities, among whom is Xbalanque (Figure 29c). He can be identified only through his nominal glyph, since he lacks god-markings or any other distinguishing feature. In the Madrid Codex he materializes in a beekeeping section on page 104b (Figure 28d); in this section, the glyphic passage associated with each supernatural usually reads, as here, *u pak'u kab* [name of god], in this case, "he hived his bees, Xbalanque'. Although there is nothing in the Popol Vuh that throws any light on this activity, it does show that Xbalanque was an important deity in the lowlands during the late pre-Conquest period.

Figure 29. *Xbalanque in the codices. a., D23b. b., D7b. c., D21c. D., M104b.*

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Visual and glyphic evidence for Hunahpu and Xbalanque --for their triumphs over Vucub Caquix and the Lords of Xibalba -reaches from the Late Pre-Classic into the early colonial period, and includes both the highland and lowland Maya areas. In their conquest of the arrogant forces within nature and society, and of death itself, the Twins were the very model of what ruling princes should be. They were eternally youthful and therefore immortal. Their father the Maize God had suffered death in the Underworld, but thanks to their efforts he was reborn on the surface of the earth; in a like manner, so were the temporal lords of the Maya realm responsible for the seasonal planting, germination, and harvest of their great staple food, maize. Iconographically and glyphically, the Hero Twins of the Popol Vuh are to be identified as the Headband Gods (Coe 1973:83), although they may manifest themselves at times without headbands. The face and body of one -- Hunahpu -- is spotted, while the face and body of the other -- Xbalanque -- has jaguar-pelt god markings and Jaguar skin over the lower part of the face. Both may appear with spotting, but jaguar pelage is never found on both. Hunahpu is the God of the Day Ahau/Hunahpu, and Xbalanque is the God of Number Nine.

The Headband Gods are not just a younger or alternate version of the Hero Twins; they are the Hero Twins. Much confusion has resulted from an untenable equation of Triad GI with Hunahpu, and GIII with Xbalanque. Resting on the analysis of a single Classic Maya vessel, the Metropolitan Vase, this hypothesis has spawned numerous progeny, to the point that the GIll concept has come to embrace just about every image and glyph that deals, or seems to deal, with jaguars and the sun (as in Schele and Miller 1986;50-1). To make matters worse, it distorts the true role of GI, whose main function as a god of rain and lightning is confirmed by his Classic name, Chac Xib Chac. There is simply no way to connect the Hunahpu of the Popol Vuh with rain. Show me any image of GI and GIII (or any supposed version of GIII) with blowguns, or shooting a bird-monster, or playing ball, or resurrecting One Hunahpu, the Maize God, and I might reconsider my position!

We have a long way yet to go in understanding Maya Iconography, particularly in our best source of all, the scenes on Classic Maya pictorial ceramics. Great caution must be exerted in this early stage of our investigations to avoid “lumping” distinct iconic forms into categories that might later prove unacceptable and misleading. In addition, in dealing with issues of such complexity. such as ceramic image and text, it would be far wiser to base our conclusions on a whole range of examples rather than just one or a few vessels. The is danger is particularly acute in the case of “dirt” archaeologists venturing into this difficult field; nothing could be more risky than to draw sweeping iconographic generalizations from lonely specimens of archaeologically-excavated pottery while high mindedly refusing to take into account comparable, but undocumented, material. I am thinking here of the errors committed by R.E.W.Adams (1971,1977) in his analysis of the Altar de Sacrificios Vase, which has been subjected to much-needed criticism by Schele (1988;294-9).

Sources like the Popol. Vuh, the Books of Chilain Balam, and the Ritual of the Bacabs must be used in this quest, but with great care, for there are many pitfalls. We cannot always expect to define clear-cut iconic categories from any of this material, for Maya and central Mexican Iconography simply does not work that way. And, finally, we must be on guard for Iconographic traps which the ancient Maya seem to have laid for us, with our minds so conditioned by western logic. They always seem to have in reserve a few surprises which can lay waste many of our seemingly watertight explanations!

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